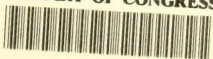
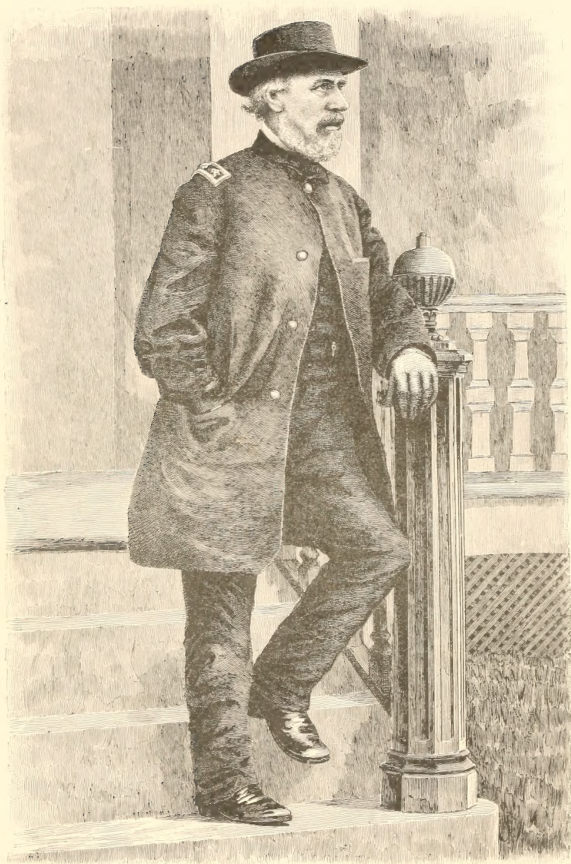


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MAJ.-GEN. EDWIN V. SUMNER
Commanding Second Army Corps
MARCH 13 TO OCTOBER 9, 1862

HISTORY
OF THE
SECOND ARMY CORPS
IN THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC

BY
masa
FRANCIS A. WALKER

BREVET BRIG.-GEN., U. S. VOLS.
ASST. ADJ.-GEN. OF THE CORPS, OCT. 9, 1862—JAN. 12, 1865

WITH PORTRAITS AND MAPS

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1886



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PREFACE.

WHEN, in 1882, after spending much time in collecting materials, I began to work actively and continuously upon the history of the Second Corps, of the five commanders of that illustrious body of troops four were still living, and ready to give me their valuable suggestions and advice. As I write these closing lines, of the five four are dead. Among the prominent staff-officers of the corps, especially competent to give information of value, the losses have been scarcely less remarkable. Toward the end, therefore, this work has been pushed forward under a painful sense of pressure and emergency. I have almost felt that my task would never be done at all, unless it were done at once.

The death of General Warren occurred before this narrative had reached the period during which that brilliant young officer won renown at the head of the Second Corps. It was the expressed purpose of General Humphreys, after concluding his "History of the Virginia Campaign of 1864-5," for the Scribner War Series, to give much time, every hour of which would have been of priceless value, to aid the present work; but before he had

taken up his pen for this purpose that heroic soldier and thrice-accomplished scholar passed away from earth. Following close upon these afflicting losses came the death, in February last, of that great captain whose name all veterans of the Potomac Army delight to utter. Since General Hancock's unexpected and startling demise, I have strained every nerve to bring my arduous task to its completion, feeling that, in truth, the "night cometh, when no man can work."

This history has undergone a great change of plan since it was first undertaken, and has come to embrace a vast amount of statistical and personal matter, in addition to the narrative of battles and marches which was contemplated at the outset. I cannot even hope that among so many thousands of separate statements regarding names, numbers, dates, order of events, juxtaposition of troops, direction of movements, etc., some mistakes have not been committed. I can only plead that great pains and labor have been expended in securing accuracy.

Even the present degree of success could not have been attained but for the information most kindly and courteously furnished by the accomplished Adjutant-General of the Army, General R. C. Drum, and by the officer who has, to the great advantage of American history, been placed in charge of the publication of the Rebellion Records. To the latter gentleman, Colonel Robert N. Scott, is due more than words can express. Colonel J. B. Batchelder, the Government historian of Gettysburg, has rendered much valuable aid, which is acknowledged with warm gratitude.

Colonels Fred. C. Newhall, Arnold A. Rand, and John P. Nicholson have also given me much assistance.

For reasons which appear to me good, I do not here acknowledge the assistance which I have received from many officers of the Second Corps, to whom thanks have been personally returned, and whose kindness and courtesy I shall ever bear in remembrance.

Among Confederate officers Generals Wade Hampton, Henry Heth, and C. M. Wilcox; Colonel William Allan, Major Jed. Hotchkiss, and Captain Gordon McCabe have given valuable information in response to my inquiries. I am indebted to St. George R. Fitzhugh, Esq., of Fredericksburg, for topographical details regarding that memorable battlefield, now greatly obscured by roads opened and houses built since the war.

The maps which illustrate this volume have been constructed with a view to giving the greatest possible assistance to readers not skilled in topography or accustomed to study elaborate and intricate plans of campaigns and battles. Whatever credit is due for their mechanical execution belongs largely to Mr. Charles L. Adams, whose skilful pen drew all but three or four of them, with a result in clearness and accuracy which I cannot but believe the reader will highly appreciate.

The list of portraits embellishing this volume would have been at points different, but for the lack of good pictures of some of the most meritorious officers of the Corps, especially among those who fell during the war. It seemed best not to present a portrait of any officer, however distinguished, unless a fairly good likeness could

be obtained, many of the ante-war ambrotypes and photographs being scarcely less than caricatures.

Mrs. General Morgan has from the first allowed the unrestricted use of the manuscript narrative, and other military papers of her distinguished husband ; and to this more than to all other causes must be attributed whatever merit shall be found in this history of the Second Army Corps.

BOSTON, September, 1886.

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among whose Generals of Division were numbered Sedgwick, Richardson, Howard, French, Barlow, Birney, Miles, Mott, Gibbon, Webb, and Alexander Hays; the corps which crossed the Chickahominy to the rescue of the beaten left at Fair Oaks; which made the great assault at Marye's Heights; on which fell the fury of Longstreet's charge at Gettysburg; which was the rear guard, October 14th, at Auburn and at Bristoe; which stormed the Salient at Spottsylvania, and at Farmville fought the last infantry battle of the war against the Army of Northern Virginia.

One man there was who, of all the soldiers of the Second Corps, should have written its history. That man was its Inspector-General. The commanders of the corps gladly acknowledged how much they owed to him of the success they were enabled to achieve at the head of that gallant body of troops; but few of the more than one hundred thousand soldiers who, for longer or shorter terms, served under its colors while he was chief of its staff knew how much of dangers averted, of labors saved, of hardships mitigated, of glory won, was due to that peerless officer, General Charles H. Morgan; how many blows that would have fallen with fatal effect were warded off by his sleepless vigilance; how many useless marches and tormenting vigils his wise and thoughtful prevision avoided; how many lives, in the furious assaults to which this devoted corps was summoned, were saved by his judicious dispositions, in which a thorough knowledge of the principles of war mingled with shrewd observation of the field, clear insight into character, and sound practical judgment.¹

¹ General Morgan, after the close of the war, undertook to write the history of the corps, and collected much material for this purpose. In a letter to me, under date of March 14, 1867, General

The Second Army Corps was organized March 13, 1862, by General Orders No. 101, Headquarters Army of the Potomac. Three divisions were included in the original assignment of troops—those of Richardson, Blenker, and Sedgwick. On the 31st of the same month, however, Blenker's division was detached, not only from the new corps, but also from the Army of the Potomac. The brief term during which this division remained of the Second Corps—it could hardly be said with the Second Corps, for no two divisions of the new command had yet been brought together—would not justify its inclusion in this narrative, and it will accordingly be left out of account in all statements regarding the history of the corps, its numbers, or its personnel.

In like manner, the Eighth Illinois Cavalry, Colonel Farnsworth, whose service at the headquarters of the corps was of short duration and, for lack of opportunity, inconsequential character, will be omitted.

Of the two divisions left to the corps, after Blenker's detachment, that of Richardson comprised the brigades of Howard, Meagher, and French, which were severally constituted as follows :

Morgan, to my deep regret, intimated his purpose of abandoning the task ; and, on November 4th of the same year, he wrote me that he had definitely decided to do so, on the ground that, being in the regular army, he was not at liberty to express his views regarding some of his superior officers on matters which would necessarily come within the scope of his proposed work. General Morgan, however, before his lamented death, in 1872, left a continuous though brief manuscript account of the operations of the corps from November, 1862, to November, 1864, from which I have, with the permission of Mrs. Morgan, freely drawn in the following narrative.

FIRST BRIGADE.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL OLIVER O. HOWARD, COMMANDING.

5th New Hampshire, Colonel EDWARD E. CROSS.

61st New York, Colonel SPENCER W. CONE.

64th New York, Colonel THOMAS J. PARKER.

81st Pennsylvania, Colonel JAMES MILLER.

SECOND BRIGADE.

[Known as the Irish Brigade.]

BRIGADIER-GENERAL THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER, COMMANDING.

63d New York, Colonel JOHN BURKE.

69th New York, Colonel ROBERT NUGENT.

88th New York, Colonel HENRY M. BAKER.

THIRD BRIGADE.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILLIAM H. FRENCH, COMMANDING.

52d New York, Colonel PAUL FRANK.

57th New York, Colonel SAMUEL K. ZOOK.

66th New York, Colonel JOSEPH C. PINCKNEY.

53d Pennsylvania, Colonel JOHN R. BROOKE.

ARTILLERY.

CAPTAIN GEORGE W. HAZZARD, COMMANDING.

Battery B, 1st New York, Captain PETTIT.

Battery G, 1st New York, Captain FRANK.

Battery A, 2d Battalion New York, Captain HOGAN.

Batteries A & C, 4th United States, Captain HAZZARD.

This division was, until the formation of the corps, commanded by General Sumner. During the winter it had been encamped in front of Fort Worth, touching the Orange and Alexandria Railroad at Camp California,

where, through the long months of weary waiting in the mud, it had been put through a severe and unremitting course of drills, reviews, inspections, sham-fights, marches, tours of picket, and reviews. The commander was himself of race-horse stock ; he ran until he dropped ; and he expected no less from every man of his raw troops. On the assignment of General Sumner to the command of the corps, Brigadier-General Israel B. Richardson succeeded to the command of this division. General Richardson, a native of Vermont, graduated from West Point in 1841, entering the army as Second Lieutenant in the Third Infantry. He greatly distinguished himself in every important battle of Scott's column, during the Mexican War, and was brevetted Captain and Major. In 1851 he became Captain ; and in 1855 retired from the army, taking up his residence in Michigan, where, on the outbreak of the war, he organized the second regiment of that State. He commanded a brigade at Bull Run, and was subsequently appointed a Brigadier-General of Volunteers, to date from May 12, 1861.

Of the brigade commanders of this division, two were destined to high commands : Howard, as commander of the Eleventh Corps and subsequently of the Army of the Tennessee in the West ; French, as commander of the Third Corps. Thomas Francis Meagher, the third of the brigade commanders of the division, was already famous as one of the orators and leaders of the Irish rebellion of 1848. An exile from his native land, he had often delighted and aroused his countrymen in America by his romantic eloquence, and, on the outbreak of hostilities, had raised the so-called Irish Brigade, which was to remain to the close of the war one of the most picturesque features of the Second Corps, whether in fight, on the march, or in camp.

The division of Sedgwick comprised the brigades of Gorman, Burns, and Dana, which were constituted as follows :

FIRST BRIGADE.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILLIS A. GORMAN, COMMANDING.

1st Minnesota, Colonel ALFRED SULLY.

15th Massachusetts, Colonel CHARLES DEVENS, Jr.

34th New York, Colonel JAMES A. SUITER.

82d New York (2d New York State Militia), Colonel GEORGE W. B. TOMPKINS.

1st Company Massachusetts (Andrew) Sharpshooters, attached to 15th Massachusetts.

SECOND BRIGADE.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILLIAM W. BURNS, COMMANDING.

69th Pennsylvania, Colonel JOSHUA T. OWEN.

71st Pennsylvania, Colonel ISAAC J. WISTAR.

72d Pennsylvania, Colonel D. W. C. BAXTER.

106th Pennsylvania, Colonel T. G. MOREHEAD.

THIRD BRIGADE.

BRIGADIER-GENERAL NAPOLEON J. T. DANA, COMMANDING.

7th Michigan, Colonel IRA R. GROSVENOR.

19th Massachusetts, Colonel EDWARD W. HINKS.

20th Massachusetts, Colonel WILLIAM RAYMOND LEE.

42d New York, Colonel E. C. CHARLES.

ARTILLERY.

COLONEL C. H. TOMPKINS (1st Rhode Island), COMMANDING.

Battery I, 1st United States, Lieutenant E. KIRBY.

Battery A, 1st Rhode Island, Captain J. A. TOMPKINS.

Battery B, 1st Rhode Island, Captain BARTLETT.

Battery G, 1st Rhode Island, Captain OWEN.

This division might not inappropriately be called the Ball's Bluff Division, most of the regiments having

served under General Charles P. Stone on the Upper Potomac during the fall of 1861, several of them, especially the Fifteenth and Twentieth Massachusetts, the Forty-Second New York, and the Seventy-First Pennsylvania, participating with much loss of life, though not of honor, in the disastrous battle of Ball's Bluff, October 21st.

During the winter of 1861-62 the three brigades composing this division were stationed along the Upper Potomac, extending from Point of Rocks, near Harper's Ferry, to Great Falls, with division headquarters at Poolesville. About March 1st the division began to move, by brigades or regiments, up "The Valley" toward Berryville, where the division headquarters were at the date of the issue of the order for the formation of army corps.

The commander of the division, Brigadier-General John Sedgwick, a native of Connecticut, was a graduate of West Point, entering the army in 1837, as Second Lieutenant of Artillery. He was successively brevetted Captain and Major for gallantry in Mexico; and, at the outbreak of the war, held the commission of Lieutenant-Colonel of Cavalry. April 25th, he was made Colonel of Cavalry, and August 31st, was appointed Brigadier-General of Volunteers.

The Second Brigade, under General Burns, was commonly known as the Philadelphia Brigade.¹ It had been raised early in 1861, by Colonel E. D. Baker, then United States Senator from Oregon, one of the regiments, the Seventy-first, being first known as the California Regiment. The Seventy-second had been originally known as the Philadelphia Fire Zouaves.

¹ The history of this brigade has been written by Colonel C. H. Banes, Assistant Adjutant-General of the command.

Of the commanders of brigades, the highest in rank, General Gorman, had formerly been Colonel of the First Minnesota Regiment. The next in rank, General Burns, a graduate of West Point, had been, at the outbreak of the war, a Commissary of Subsistence in the regular army, with the rank of Captain. The commander of the Third Brigade, General Dana, had succeeded General Gorman in the command of the First Minnesota, and had, in February, 1862, been appointed a Brigadier-General of Volunteers, being succeeded in the colonelcy of his regiment by Alfred Sully, Major of the Eighth United States Infantry, who was also to be, in the September following, appointed Brigadier-General of Volunteers, making the third general officer graduated from this splendid regiment.

Such was the body of troops gathered together and named the Second Army Corps by the order of March 13, 1862.

It is not possible at this date to give their numbers with exactness, inasmuch as the first two "Monthly Returns" of the corps, those for April and for May, do not include the Irish Brigade or the artillery of Richardson's division. If we adopt the returns from that brigade for June as good for April, and duplicate the figures of Sedgwick's artillery to make up that of Richardson, we should have the following :

| | Richardson's Infantry. | Sedgwick's Infantry. | Artillery. | Total. |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|------------|--------|
| Present for duty..... | 7,076 | 9,807 | 1,050 | 17,933 |
| Present on extra or daily duty. | 229 | 242 | 16 | 487 |
| Present, sick | 680 | 261 | 18 | 959 |
| Present in arrest..... | 25 | 27 | 36 | 88 |
| Total present..... | 8,010 | 10,337 | 1,120 | 19,467 |
| Total absent..... | 1,039 | 1,005 | 42 | 2,086 |
| Total present and absent... | 9,049 | 11,342 | 1,162 | 21,553 |

The foregoing figures, doubtless, afford a reasonably close approximation to the numbers of the new command on the 13th of March, 1862.

The commander selected for the Second Corps was Brigadier-General Edwin V. Sumner, a veteran officer of the regular army. A native of Boston, he had entered the army in 1819, as Second Lieutenant in the Second Infantry, and served in the Black Hawk War. Upon the organization of the Second Dragoons, he was commissioned a Captain in that regiment; was promoted Major in 1846, and in 1847 led the famous cavalry charge at Cerro Gordo, where he was wounded and obtained the brevet of Lieutenant-Colonel. At Contreras and Cherubusco he won high honors, and at Molino del Rey commanded Scott's entire cavalry forces against the vast array of Mexican lancers, for which he was brevetted Colonel. In 1848 he became Lieutenant-Colonel of the First Dragoons, and in 1855 Colonel of the First Cavalry. Until the imminence of secession he remained upon the plains, commanding in Kansas during the border troubles, and conducting a successful campaign against the Cheyenne Indians. The distrust entertained by the Administration concerning the probable action of General Albert Sydney Johnston led to his being sent in 1861 to San Francisco to relieve that officer in command on that coast, which General Sumner's unflinching loyalty and courage did much to hold true to the Union cause.

It is an open secret that the commanders of the five army corps formed on the day of which we are writing were selected by the President, and not by the commander of the Army of the Potomac. Had General McClellan proceeded to effect the organization of his forces into army corps in the fall of 1861, he would

doubtless have been able to do so without interference; but the long winter of inaction had so far alienated the President and Congress, had created so many jealousies among the expectant officers of high rank, and had kept General McClellan so long upon the defensive, in explaining and justifying his position, that when the organization of the army corps took place in March President Lincoln was able to impose his will upon the commander of the Army of the Potomac in the matter of the officers to be selected for these immensely responsible positions. Of these designations it may be said that General McClellan should have been allowed his own untrammelled choice in the matter.

Nothing but mischief could rationally be expected from thus overriding the judgment and will of the commander of the army. If General McClellan was not fit to appoint the heads of his corps, he could not have been fit to command them when appointed. In fact, however, the corps commanders¹ were as a body most unhappily chosen. General McDowell was, indeed, an officer of great accomplishments; but he lay under the deep and deepening shadow of his Bull Run defeat, and to the end was pursued by a demon of ill-luck. The President's scheme to give him a chance to rehabilitate himself was kindly, but was not wise. That thing has often been attempted in the history of war, but has rarely, if ever, proved successful. Of Generals Heintzelman and Keyes, the designated commanders of the Third and Fourth Corps, respectively, it is not necessary to speak. The unanimity of the consent with which

¹ The 5th Corps was that of General Banks. This designation was afterward disregarded, and that number was assigned to the new corps of Porter.

they were "shelved," after a short trial, affords a sufficient commentary upon their original selection.

Of the commander of the new Second Corps, much may be said upon either side of the question whether, with his mental habits and at his advanced age, he should have been designated for the command of twenty thousand new troops in the field, against a resolute and tenacious enemy skilfully and audaciously led; but every voice must award praise, and only praise, to his transcendent soldierly virtues. Jupiter, shining full, clear, and strong in the midnight heavens, might be the disembodied soul of Edwin V. Sumner. In honor, in courage, in disinterestedness, in patriotism, in magnanimity, he shone resplendent. Meanness, falsehood, duplicity were more hateful than death to the simple-hearted soldier who had put himself, sword in hand, at the head of the divisions of Richardson and Sedgwick.

The history of the Second Corps cannot be written without full and explicit recognition of the influence which its first commander exerted, especially upon the younger officers and soldiers of the corps, in that highly plastic state of mind which belonged to the early months of the war. It is difficult at this time, it was difficult even in 1865, to go back to the sentiments and feelings which moved the citizen soldiery of 1861-62, fresh from their homes, before custom had staled the ideas of patriotic sacrifice and martial glory; before long delays and frequent disappointments had robbed war of its romance, and a score of melancholy failures had stained our banners with something like disgrace; before the curse of conscription had come to make the uniform a thing of doubtful honor, and to substitute the "bounty jumper" for the generous volunteer; while yet all the soldiers in the field were those who sprang to arms in

that great uprising of a free people. Yet none who remember the first winter camps of the Army of the Potomac can have wholly forgotten the high resolve, the fervid enthusiasm, the intense susceptibility to patriotic appeals, the glad and joyous confidence in the speedy success of the Union cause, which animated officers and men, and which, seeking some embodied object, created that ideal of their first leader which defeat and disgrace could not shatter, and which time and distance have hardly yet dimmed to the sight of the men of 1861-62. A state of feeling like this is a source of tremendous power. Such Hoche found it in 1793; such Napoleon found it, when he commanded the army of Italy; such McClellan found it in the Army of the Potomac. Doubtless, discipline and experience of war, even through disaster and humiliation, brought a compensation for the loss of this early spirit; doubtless, the First Minnesota, the Fifth New Hampshire, the Seventh Michigan, the Twentieth Massachusetts, the Fifty-third Pennsylvania, the Sixty-first New York were better regiments; doubtless, they would have been better regiments, however handled, in 1863 than in 1861; yet not the less was the spirit of the earlier time a thing beautiful and precious.

Upon a body of citizen soldiers, in the first flush of martial enthusiasm, a commander so chivalrous in feeling, so heroic in bearing, as Sumner could not fail to produce a profound and lasting impression. Frank Bartlett was a captain at the time of which we are writing; Nelson Miles, only a lieutenant of the line; and from every camp a host of young fellows looked up, in almost child-like readiness to follow, quickness to learn, eagerness to imitate, as their appointed leaders swept by in all the pomp of war. If the Second Corps had a touch above the common; if in the terrible ordeals of flame

and death through which, in three years of almost continuous fighting, they were called to pass these two divisions showed a courage and tenacity that made them observed among the bravest; if they learned to drop their thousands upon the field as often as they were summoned to the conflict, but on no account to leave a color in the hands of the enemy, it was very largely through the inspiration derived from the gallant old chieftain who first organized them and led them into battle. It is easy to criticise Sumner's dispositions at Antietam—the dangerous massing of Sedgwick's brigades, the exposure of the flank of the charging column, the failure of the commander to supervise and direct, from some central point, all the operations of the corps; yet no one who saw him there, hat in hand, his white hair streaming in the wind, riding abreast of the field officers of the foremost line, close up against the rocky ledges bursting with the deadly flame of Jackson's volleys, could ever fail thereafter to understand the furious thrust with which a column of the Second Corps always struck the enemy, or the splendid intrepidity with which its brigade and division commanders were wont to ride through the thickest of the fight as calmly as on parade.

The corps staff consisted of Captain J. H. Taylor, Sixth United States Cavalry, Acting Assistant Adjutant-General; Captain F. N. Clarke, Chief of Artillery; Lieutenants L. Kip, A. H. Cushing, and S. S. Sumner, Aides-de-Camp; Surgeon J. F. Hammond, Medical Director.

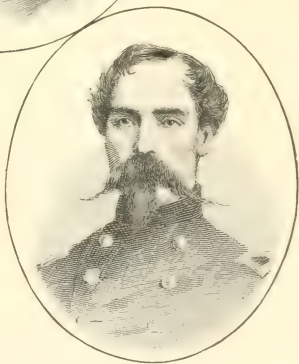
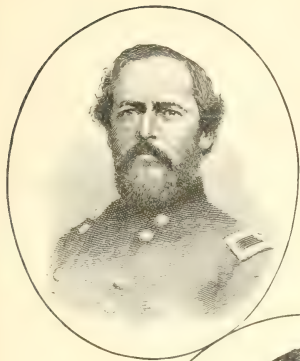
CHAPTER II.

THE PENINSULA : FAIR OAKS.

THE command to move to the Peninsula of Virginia, to open the campaign of 1862, found the two divisions of the Second Corps widely separated. Few men in either division had ever seen so much as a regiment of the other. Into what an intimacy, extending through more than three years of indescribable exertions, hardships, and dangers, were they to be thrown, by their casual selection as the two wings of the same army corps !

Sumner's old division, now commanded by Richardson, was in the advance of the army on the direct route to Richmond, French's brigade lying at Manassas, with Howard and Meagher within supporting distance along the Bull Run. Sedgwick's division extended up the Valley of Virginia from Charlestown to Berryville. Yet, though Sedgwick was the furthest removed, he was the first to reach the new field of operations. His brigades, returning to Point of Rocks, there took cars for Washington, where, after a pause of two days, they were embarked for Fort Monroe. The troops of the Army of the Potomac, as they arrived, were held as near as convenient to Old Point Comfort, in order to keep the enemy in doubt whether the movement was to be against Richmond or against Norfolk.

On April 4th, however, Richardson not having reached the Peninsula, Sedgwick's division moved, under the orders of General Heintzelman, the commander of the



BREVET MAJ.-GEN. SAM'L K. ZOOK

BREVET MAJ.-GEN. JOHN R. BROOKE

MAJ.-GEN. ISRAEL B. RICHARDSON

BRIG.-GEN. THOMAS FRANCIS MEAGHER

BREVET BRIG.-GEN. ROBERT NUGENT

Third Corps, proceeding by the New Market Bridge, taking the direct road to Big Bethel, and bivouacking for the night at Howard's Bridge. Early on the morning of the 5th, the division was again put in motion up the Yorktown Road, the order of the day stating that this division would, for the present, act with the reserve, and receive orders from headquarters. Not even when the army sat down before Yorktown had Richardson's troops come up.

On the right of the line, Heintzelman, with the Third Corps, confronted Yorktown; on the left, Keyes, with the Fourth Corps, held the line of the lower Warwick, while the one present division of the Second Corps occupied the centre, connecting with Hamilton of the Third and Smith of the Fourth. Sumner was compensated for the loss of two-thirds his original force (Blenker being detached, and Richardson not coming up until April 16th) by an assignment, April 6th, to the command of the entire left, including Sedgwick and the three divisions of the Fourth Corps. "Throughout the preparations for and during the siege of Yorktown," says McClellan, in his official report, "I kept the corps under General Keyes, and afterward the left wing under General Sumner, engaged in ascertaining the character of the obstacles presented by the Warwick, and the enemy entrenched on the right bank, with the intention, if possible, of overcoming them and breaking that line of defence, so as to gain possession of the road to Williamsburg and cut off Yorktown from its supports and supplies." This intention was not destined to be realized. The work of Sumner and Keyes on the left¹ proved as futile as that of Heintzelman at the

¹ On April 16th, Brooks' (Vermont) brigade of Smith's division, then of the Fourth, afterward of the Sixth, Corps, crossed the

other end of the line. Just before the date fixed for the bombardment and assault of Yorktown, the enemy, having gained a precious month, evacuated their works. The morning of May 4th found their lines deserted, and Stoneman's cavalry, with Smith's infantry division of the Fourth Corps following, with other troops at greater intervals, was pushed forward in pursuit. On May 5th, at Williamsburg, twelve miles from Yorktown, was fought the first considerable action of the Army of the Potomac.

Although not a regiment of the Second Corps fought at Williamsburg, this battle is not without importance in the history of that corps, from the fact that three of the five officers who commanded it, during its history, were prominently engaged therein. Sumner, the then commander of the corps, was, on May 4th, placed in command of the troops, of all arms, of all the corps hastening to intercept the Confederate retreat; and it was under his direction that the battle of the 5th was fought; Couch, who was destined to succeed Sumner in the command of the corps, was seriously though not desperately engaged, with one-half of his own division of the Fourth Corps, in support of Hooker, in the immediate front of the main Confederate work, Fort Magruder; while, on the extreme right, Hancock, who in turn was destined to succeed Couch, crossing Cub Dam

Warwick and had a very spirited encounter with the enemy. Sedgwick's division was not engaged, nor had it any other duty, beyond the routine of the camp, during these days than that of picketing in front of the enemy. In this service, however, was sustained a loss worthy of notice, in the severe wounding of a captain of the Twentieth Massachusetts, afterward to become, as Colonel and as General William Francis Bartlett, one of the best known soldiers of the war, distinguished alike for his peerless gallantry and for the number and severity of his wounds.

Creek with five regiments of Smith's division, encountered Early's brigade in an action which remained, to the end of the war, one of the prettiest fights on record. Awaiting the attack of the enemy with perfect composure, until they had approached to within thirty yards, Hancock led his line forward in a charge which broke Early's brigade, and drove it back in confusion, with the loss of one hundred and sixty prisoners and one color. Hancock's enterprise, however, had little effect upon the general fortunes of the day, inasmuch as, without supports, it would have been manifest folly for him to venture farther into the enemy's rear; and he was accordingly obliged to content himself with the ground he had gained and with the brilliant repulse of the force sent to drive him away. And so, after ten or eleven hours of desultory and purposeless fighting, night fell upon the field of Williamsburg, and under cover of darkness the Confederate rearguard continued its interrupted retreat up the Peninsula. The divisions of Richardson and Sedgwick, which had, late in the afternoon of the 5th, been ordered by General McClellan toward Williamsburg, upon the receipt of news that Hooker's division was being roughly handled, were directed to return to Yorktown, thence to proceed by water to West Point, upon the Pamunkey.¹ This second movement to intercept Lee's retreat having failed, the several corps proceeded for the rest of their journey more leisurely, until they reached the line of the Chickahominy, the destined scene of so many bloody battles, in which the prestige and the high hopes of the Army of the Potomac were to

¹ Dana's brigade of Sedgwick's division arrived at West Point in season to support Franklin in his engagement with Whiting's Confederate division, near that point, on May 7th, but was not itself engaged.

be crushed by the swiftly dealt blows of a vigilant, daring, and powerful enemy, to whom every avenue of effective assault had been opened by the mischievous meddling of the Government at Washington.

During this march two new corps were added to the roll of the army, not by the much-needed reinforcement of its numbers, but by the partition of existing corps. The Fifth Corps, under General Fitz John Porter, was formed out of the division of Sykes, which contained the "regular" infantry, together with the division formerly commanded by Porter himself, and the reserve artillery of the Army of the Potomac. The Sixth Corps, commanded by General William B. Franklin, comprised his own former division, together with that of Smith, detached from the Fourth Corps. Thus, the Third and Fourth Corps were reduced to two divisions each, as the Second Corps had, at an earlier date, been through the detachment of Blenker. The ten infantry divisions of the Army of the Potomac were now organized into five corps, the Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth, the First Corps, McDowell, being held in front of Washington.

In the first instance the two new corps were apologetically called "Provisional Corps;" but all occasion for apology soon disappeared. After Gaines' Mill, Savage Station, Glendale, and Malvern, the "provisional" character of these two gallant bodies of troops was forgotten; and they took their place high up on the roll of the noblest and the bravest of the defenders of the Union, retaining their corps existence unbroken until the conclusion of peace, surviving every one of those earlier formed except that whose history we are here writing, between which and one of the new organizations, the heroic, great-hearted Sixth, was to grow up a brotherhood in arms,

a spirit of mutual affection and confidence, largely, no doubt, the result, especially at the beginning, of fortuitous circumstances, but also, as the soldiers of either corps were glad to believe, the proper effect, in no small part, of moral sympathy and similarity of character. Tried together on a score of fields, the Second and the Sixth were like brothers in fight. Side by side they loved to meet the enemy; neither had any fear for its flank, as long as the other was there; or, if the fight had been long and desperate, if straggling men began to go back from the front with significant frequency, if here and there a shattered regiment fell out, and a something like an actual weight kept forcing back the line step by step, while the shriller and louder yells of the foe told that they felt the inspiration of coming victory, then did the men of the Second rejoice to hear the word passed along that the Sixth Corps was coming up behind. Well they knew the stuff out of which its regiments were made; well they knew the men who rode serene and strong at the head of its divisions and brigades!

During the march up the Peninsula, the corps sustained a great loss in the promotion of Colonel Charles Devens, Jr., to be Brigadier-General of Volunteers. Colonel Devens had greatly distinguished himself in the disastrous battle of Ball's Bluff, and was destined, after leaving the Second Corps, to win high honors as commander, successively of divisions in the Eleventh and Eighteenth Corps, and later still, in civil life, as Attorney-General of the United States, and Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts.

Sixteen days after Williamsburg, viz., on May 21st, the positions of the troops of the Army of the Potomac were as follows: Stoneman's advance guard lay one mile from New Bridge on the Chickahominy; Franklin's

corps was three miles from New Bridge, with Porter's in rear, those troops constituting the right of the army; Sumner's corps, the centre, lay on the railroad about three miles from the Chickahominy; while the Fourth and Third Corps under Keyes and Heintzelman, forming the Union left, were on the New Kent Road, Keyes in front near Bottom's Bridge.

While in these camps, two important changes occurred in the personnel of the corps; Lieutenant-Colonel Tracey M. Winans, Seventh Michigan, resigned May 21st, and Colonel George W. B. Tompkins, Eighty-second New York, was discharged May 26th. The latter was succeeded by Lieutenant-Colonel H. W. Hudson.

A few days later the left of our army had crossed the Chickahominy, which flows from northwest to southeast across the great plain east and southeast of Richmond, and had found its way up the Williamsburg stage road and the railroad to within six or seven miles of the Confederate capital, Keyes in front at Seven Pines and Fair Oaks, with Heintzelman behind, though scarcely at close supporting distance. The centre and right of the army, comprising the strength of three corps, still lay behind the Chickahominy, extending in the order of Sumner, Franklin, and Porter to Beaver Dam Creek.¹

The obvious criticism upon the position in which the Army of the Potomac was thus placed, out of which sprang the battle of Fair Oaks, is that, until the communications across the Chickahominy had been made complete, rapid, and safe, it was the larger and not the smaller half which should have been exposed to the enemy's attack upon the Richmond side of the river. As it would be at any time in the Confederate commander's power, by

¹See map facing page 13.

the movements of a single night and forenoon, to concentrate six-sevenths of his army against the force on the Williamsburg stage road, that force should have been, not two-fifths only, as in fact, but at least three-fifths, of McClellan's army. In other words, Sumner's corps, the centre, should have been at the outset posted upon the right bank of the Chickahominy, to protect the flank of Keyes' corps or to support his line of battle. Our own right, consisting of the corps of Franklin and Porter, with the reserve artillery, was in no possible danger of an irruption from the enemy's lines. It could only be attacked by a movement around its flank, such as actually took place, June 25th to 27th, of which, however, abundant notice would necessarily have been given, such a movement fairly requiring a two days' march; whereas an overwhelming force might, with scarcely an hour's notice, be poured against the two corps on the Williamsburg Road.

Serious as was the altogether unnecessary danger to which the left was thus exposed, with the army astraddle of the river, its weaker half on the enemy's side, the situation became alarming when a heavy storm, on the night of the 30th of May, set the treacherous Chickahominy to rising fast and furiously. Aside from Bottom's Bridge and the railroad bridge, both behind our left wing, there were but two bridges over the river, both on the front of Sumner, the Union centre. No bridges had yet been constructed for the crossing of the right column, although the materials for three bridges were on hand. The necessity for the advance of Sumner, which was pressing on the 30th, became urgent the moment the storm and the rising river threatened the frail extemporized bridges, by which alone he could cross to the support of Keyes. Yet the long hours of the morning of Saturday, the 31st of May, wore away without any

attention, at army headquarters, to the critical situation of the left. Sumner's men were not ordered to cross, or even called to arms, until the thunders of the artillery announced that the Confederate assault had fallen upon Keyes' corps.

The Confederate commander's plan of action was as follows: General Huger was to move on the Charles City Road, well down upon the Union left flank, then to emerge from the White Oak Swamp, crush our left and penetrate into our rear, cutting us off from Bottom's Bridge. Generals D. H. Hill and Longstreet, constituting the Confederate centre, were to attack directly down the Williamsburg Road; while General G. W. Smith, commanding the Confederate left wing, was to pass beyond the right of Keyes, ready to support Longstreet's attack, if needed, or to push toward the river, to prevent Sumner's crossing and to cut off the retreat of the Union forces if attempted in that direction. The force thus assigned to the attack comprised not less than twenty-three of the twenty-seven infantry brigades of Johnston. Fortunately for the Union forces, General Huger did not come to time, and the attack upon our left was never delivered; but precisely at one o'clock, Hill and Longstreet, after waiting more than two hours for the signal of Huger's readiness, burst upon Casey's slender line, in its half-constructed entrenchments, with a fury new to war. Soon two of Couch's brigades were caught in the tornado. Backward, steadily backward, the Fourth Corps was pressed by an irresistible force. Again and again the broken brigades were reformed along the Williamsburg Road, at times not two hundred yards from where they had made their last stand. Here fragments of regiments and even brave individuals, rallying at the commands and entreaties of a knot



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of general and staff officers, would form a feeble line, make a new stand, to be in time outflanked or fairly pushed off the ground by weight of numbers.

But where was Heintzelman? As the ranking officer on the right bank of the Chickahominy, he was in command of both the Third and the Fourth Corps. Of one of his divisions, Kearney's, two brigades, Birney's and Berry's, were in front of Savage Station, three miles in rear of Casey's advanced position; the other division, Hooker's, and Jameson's brigade of Kearney's, were near Bottom's Bridge or on the borders of White Oak Swamp, far to the rear and left. Kearney's two brigades, however, were near enough to be looked for early upon the line of battle; but from some unexplained cause, it was not, as General McClellan states, "until nearly three o'clock" that orders were sent him to move to the front. Birney's brigade moved along the railroad, which brought it up on the right of Keyes' line. Berry's regiments were the next to arrive, and, moving out to the extreme left of the struggling line, vigorously attacked the enemy, but were, by the arrival of successive reinforcements on the Confederate side, finally driven off eccentrically to the left and rear, whence they were compelled to make a detour to rejoin their comrades after dark. The last brigade to arrive was Jameson's, which had been far to the rear, near Bottom's Bridge, at the opening of the action. Two of Jameson's regiments were sent to the right and two to the left, as the exigencies of the battle required. All of Kearney's men who became engaged fought heroically, and, with the remnants of Casey's division, and with Couch's two brigades, contested the ground adown the Williamsburg Road, foot by foot, and at last brought the Confederates to a stand before the entrenchments constructed by Couch on the 27th and 28th, at Allen's

Farm, in front of Savage Station. The existence of this rear line of works proved, in this emergency, of priceless value to our beaten troops, though Couch had had some difficulty in securing the assent of the corps commander to its construction. Night was fast coming on ; the enemy had lost much of their own impetus in the successive encounters of the afternoon ; their casualties in killed and wounded had been enormous ; their stragglers had gone to the rear, like ours, by thousands ; and they were, perhaps, glad enough to pause and content themselves with their trophies in prisoners and colors, and the guns captured on Casey's line.

So much for the assault of D. H. Hill and Longstreet. But what of G. W. Smith ? It is with this column we are here chiefly concerned. We have seen that to Smith was assigned the duty of supporting Longstreet's left if needed ; and, in the case of the success of the attack in front, of moving around the Union right, to cut it off from the river and to prevent Sumner from advancing to the rescue. Smith would seem to have been in position promptly enough, for General Johnston, the Confederate commander-in-chief, was with this column in person and gives Smith high praise ; yet, for nearly three hours after Hill and Longstreet began their work, Smith made no movement. General Johnston gives the reason that, "owing to some peculiar condition of the atmosphere, the sound of the musketry did not reach us." The day was still enough, and Generals Johnston and Smith could not have been three miles from the field where thirty thousand men were engaged in fierce combat. It is true that thick woods intervened, yet this quenching of sound, at so short a distance, seems very strange. Sumner had heard the noise of the battle, and was already hastening to the field, starting not later

than half past two o'clock, while Johnston did not give Smith the order to go in until an hour and a half later. About four o'clock, then, the order was given for Smith to advance.¹ General Couch, who, with his division (the First of the Fourth Corps), had, at the beginning of the action, occupied a line which was in general in rear of and in support of Casey's division, had his right extended farther than Casey's, to hold Fair Oaks Station with two regiments, the Sixty-fifth New York and Eighty-second Pennsylvania, with Brady's Pennsylvania Battery, under General Abercrombie. Abercrombie's force was in *échelon* on Casey's right, occupying a position which G. W. Smith's orders might require him to pass. Just prior to the Confederate advance, General Couch proceeded in person to the Fair Oaks Station, where he was joined by Russell's Seventh Massachusetts and Riker's Sixty-second New York, raising the force at the Station to four regiments and a battery.

The Confederate General Hood now crossing the Nine Mile Road cut Couch completely off from the troops at Seven Pines. At the same time another column was seen moving around to the right of Fair Oaks, threatening to envelop Couch's little command. Thus menaced, there was no choice left Couch but retreat to the Adams House, about eight hundred yards from the Fair Oaks

¹ Johnston's report says that Longstreet, after waiting long for Huger, determined at 2 P.M. to attack independently. "He accordingly commenced his attack at that hour, opening the engagement with artillery and skirmishers. By three o'clock it became close and heavy." The fact is, Hill and Longstreet's attack was in full blast by one o'clock by Union watches. On this point the writer can testify from positive knowledge. Johnston says he deferred the order for Smith's advance "until about four o'clock." G. W. Smith says, "Between four and five o'clock heavy musketry was distinctly heard," etc.

Station, where he determined to await the appearance of the enemy in his front ; the appearance of Sumner from the river in the rear. It was, indeed, a critical position. For Couch to save himself was easy enough ; he could fall back along the road to Grapevine Bridge with his four regiments and four guns quite as fast as the enemy could follow, but this would be to leave open to Smith's attack the flank of the force now slowly contesting the advance of Hill and Longstreet.¹ This Couch, knowing well how desperate was the contest adown the Williamsburg Road, from which he had but recently come, resolved not to do ; and, having fallen back to the Adams House as narrated, he determined to retire no farther, but here to await his fate. Had Smith been ten minutes earlier, and Sumner ten minutes later, it is difficult to say what might have happened to the brigade which stood there at bay. Once engaged with superior force,

¹ That Couch's withdrawal from Fair Oaks Station, while it saved his own command from immediate destruction, did not in the sequel really uncover the flank of the troops on the Williamsburg Road, is shown by G. W. Smith's report, in which he says that he was proceeding toward that road, but was obliged to face about and attack batteries supported by infantry, which Whiting's and his other troops found upon their left and rear, and whose fire was becoming troublesome. He says : " It was confidently believed that we should soon capture or drive off the batteries and resume our march in support of Longstreet." In a word, Couch had withdrawn himself just far enough to be at the most effective distance, in *échelon* on the right of the Union line ; so near that Smith could not safely pass across his front to attack Keyes' and Heintzelman's troops on the Williamsburg Road, yet so far retired as to cause the enemy to lose a great deal of time in making deployments and dispositions to attack him, and requiring Smith to detach for that purpose twice as many troops as would have been needed to completely run down and destroy Couch's four regiments, had they remained at Fair Oaks Station.

it would no longer be in the power of their commander to withdraw them from action; and in front and on the right the enemy was fast gathering in threatening masses. So this little command, thrown eccentrically to the right and rear from the main body, held its place, looking backward to the woods to catch the gleam of Sumner's bayonets, looking forward to the foe. Yet even now Couch held his troops in column of regiments, not knowing whether the exigencies of the next half hour might require him to give battle to the front against troops coming down from the railroad, or to the right against a turning column plainly to be seen in that direction, or in some emergency to face to the left and try to cut his way through to rejoin Keyes and Heintzelman.

Let us see where Sumner was, and what he had been doing. The condition of the atmosphere was not so peculiar that day but that the sound of battle was borne straight to the ears of the old soldier whose command lay nearest to the imperilled left. That sound went straight from his ears to his heart. Anxious about the left, anxious about his swaying bridges, Sumner was at once in the saddle and summoned his troops to arms. A little later word came from the headquarters of the army that the Second Corps should be prepared to march at a moment's notice. The troops were at once drawn out of camp and moved toward the Chickahominy. Too strict a disciplinarian to actually begin the crossing of the river, Sumner led his divisions down to the very verge of the stream, until the heads of column rested on their respective bridges. Here he paused, awaiting the order to march.

Both bridges over the raging and fast-rising torrent were in a terrible condition. The long corduroy approaches through the swamp had been uplifted from the

mud, and now floated loosely on the shallow water. The condition of that part of the bridges which crossed the channel of the river it was impossible to ascertain, except by actual trial; but its timbers could be seen rising and falling, and swaying to and fro, under the impulses of the swollen floods. At half past two the order came, and each division tried to pass over its bridge, Richardson below, Sedgwick above, at the so-called Grapevine Bridge, but with different results. Richardson's bridge, which would have been practicable in the morning, had now so nearly given away that when French's brigade only had crossed it became impassable. Sedgwick's division had better luck, though even Sumner's stout heart failed, for the time, as the bridge swayed and tossed in the river. But the solid column of infantry, loading it with a weight with which even the angry Chickahominy could not trifle, soon pressed and held it down among the stumps of the trees, which in turn prevented its lateral motion. And as Sedgwick's rear passed over, the remaining brigades of Richardson's column, coming up from below, entered upon the bridge; and so the Second Corps crossed the Chickahominy to the rescue of the broken left wing by a single submerged bridge, which held together just long enough to allow their passage.

Even so, Sumner could not get his artillery through. The approaches to the bridge, on the Richmond side, were in such a wretched condition that guns and caissons were stalled in the mud. Only one artillery officer, the gallant Kirby, was able to push his battery—I, of the First, the well-known Rickett's Battery of the old army—up to the plain which rises far enough above the bed of the river not to have been affected by the flood. After all that skilled drivers and perfectly trained horses could

do, it would have been impossible to get even Kirby's guns forward, had they not been almost carried by main force of human muscle applied by details from the infantry. The other batteries still lay stuck in the mud—that Virginia mud which every soldier of the Army of Potomac remembers so well.

And now the cry is Forward! Sedgwick's division is fairly across the treacherous river, and turning without a guide it takes the road that leads most directly toward the thunders of the cannonade and the roar of musketry along the Williamsburg Road. There was enough in that sound to stir the blood of the true soldier. Every man in the ranks understood that the whole fury of the most powerful assault which Johnston could deliver had fallen, and was still falling, on the imperilled left. Step out, men of the First Minnesota! Swing your long Western¹ legs to their full compass every time! You are setting the pace for the whole rescuing column. Your comrades of the Third and Fourth Corps are turning bloodshot eyes adown the road to "Sumner's Bridge," awaiting the gleam of your bayonets.

Well did the First Minnesota take and hold their pace that day! and as some turn of the road or some clearing on the left brought the sound of battle in vehement bursts nearer and clearer to their ears, each man clutched his musket tighter and hurried faster along the way to Fair Oaks.

The end comes at last. As the head of column

¹ It was a good thing or a bad thing to have a Western regiment at the head of the column, according as there was especial need of haste or not. The writer well remembers the trouble he has had to keep the stride of Carroll's men from Ohio and Indiana down to something less than forty inches, when they chanced to lead the march on a hot day.

emerges from a belt of timber, a low ridge appears in front crossing the road at nearly right angles, upon which are massed Couch's four regiments with Brady's battery. Doubtless the men of Ball's Bluff who were in the advance had expected to come upon volleying lines reeling under the shock of furious charges, half hidden by the sulphurous clouds of battle. But, lo! all before is calm and serene. Are these the men to whose rescue we have been rushing in furious haste, not even as yet deployed in line of battle; not a puff of smoke visible; not even a cannon-shot hurtling over their ranks? But Sully's men have short time for speculation regarding the position. The moment Couch sees the advance of Sumner's column, he begins the deployment of his own troops, while one of his staff officers, galloping to the head of Sedgwick's division, detaches the First Minnesota and leads it to the right to the Courtney House,¹ where Sully has been ordered to take position. And not a moment too soon, for as the young staff officer is giving that grim veteran of the regular army some advice as to the disposition of his force, which is received with outward courtesy and probably with inward amusement, a crowded column in gray bulges out of the woods close in front. Have you noticed the instinctive recoil which always attends the first emerging from the shade of the forest into the broad glare of day? So this column, the advance of G. W. Smith, for the instant recoiled, and as its leading officers perceived Sully's men in front, it fell back into the woods to form under cover for the coming assault.

Meanwhile, at the Adams House, Kirby, with his

¹ I call this the Courtney House. It was so called at the time. It is, however, not the house given as Robert Courtney's on the engineer map.

gleaming Napoleons, dashes up on the right of the two Parrotts of Brady's battery, commanded by Lieutenant Fagan; three of Couch's regiments—the Sixty-second New York (Anderson's Zouaves), Colonel Riker, the Eighty-second (formerly Thirty-first) Pennsylvania, Colonel Williams, and the Sixty-fifth New York (First United States Chasseurs), Colonel Cochrane—move toward the right and connect with Sully, while the space on the left of the road is rapidly occupied by the eager troops of Gorman. Up comes the Fifteenth Massachusetts, under the gallant Kimball, and with a cheer forms in support of the guns that point up the Fair Oaks Road; the Thirty-fourth New York, under Suiter, and the Eighty-second, under Hudson, are quickly in place on the left—and we are ready.

But not a moment too soon; for out of the woods in front that hide the railroad from view emerges a heavy body of enemy. It is the brigade of Whiting, which cannot pass to attack Keyes' troops along the Williamsburg Road until this threatening force upon its left flank shall be driven off. Between Whiting on the Confederate right, and Hampton on the Confederate left, Pettigrew's brigade is filling the woods in our front. Hatton is fast coming up behind to support Hampton. Hood, crossing the Nine Mile Road, has halted to be in readiness to support Whiting. It is too late; half an hour ago this would have done very well; but Sedgwick is up now, and the men of the Ball's Bluff division are panting with the ardor of battle. Something more than one slim brigade now holds the road to Grapevine Bridge. The toll is raised. It will cost Smith more than he has to get through.

There is no delay in setting to work. Scarcely have four regiments of Sedgwick's taken post with Couch's

four when the storm bursts. Over against one-half our front, opposite our left, the ground is open nearly to the railroad, which we left an hour ago. Here are two guns of Brady's battery, under Lieutenant Fagan, with three guns of Kirby's, all that have as yet come upon the ground, ready to sweep the open field with their fire, or to turn to their right and shell the woods in which the enemy are massing. Behind the left of the artillery lies the Fifteenth Massachusetts. Behind the right of the battery lie Riker's Sixty-second New York and Russell's Seventh Massachusetts. On the left of the artillery are the Thirty-fourth and Eighty-second New York; on the right, extending along the inner edge of a dense woods, forming the centre of our position, lie Williams' Eighty-second Pennsylvania and Cochrane's Sixty-fifth New York, both of Couch's division, stretching along the edge of the tangled woods. They have thrown down a rail fence and piled the rails for cover. It is not high, but it will do. Against that feeble breastwork is to be delivered a most desperate and persistent charge. Beyond the Sixty-fifth New York the right of our line is formed again in the open ground, about the Courtney House, by the First Minnesota, to the support of which Burns' Pennsylvanians are fast coming up. But for these the enemy are not disposed to wait.

The attack at first took two forms: one, the most continuous and persistent, that of seeking to pierce our centre by breaking out from the woods over the line of Williams and Cochrane; another, intermittent and spasmodic, that of rushing out from the woods, dashing across the Fair Oaks Road, swinging around to the right and charging up against Kirby's and Fagan's guns. Later, the enemy made efforts to carry the position in the open ground on our right, about the Courtney House, which

was held by Sully, to whom two of Brady's guns were sent, and who was supported by the Sixty-ninth and Seventy-first Pennsylvania, of Burns' brigade, though those regiments were not engaged. The extent from our left around the Adams House to our right around the Courtney House was four to five hundred yards.

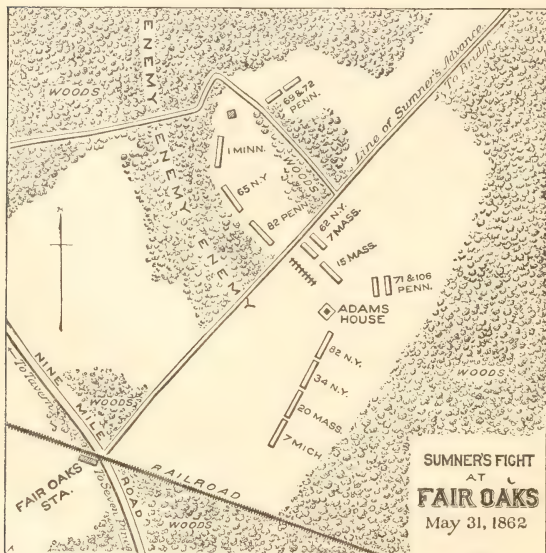
With this description of the ground and anticipation of the three phases of the fight, let us return to the moment when the ball was opened by Kirby's right piece. One of the Confederate brigades, coming across the railroad, had been permitted to form line of battle in the open facing the Adams House, under the impression that they were some of Heintzelman's troops which had turned back from the railroad upon finding Fair Oaks Station occupied by the enemy. As soon as this impression had been corrected, through close personal inspection by an officer of General Couch's staff, Kirby opened fire, whereupon that brigade moved rapidly off by its left and sought refuge in the woods, while Hampton, already in position, pushed his brigade forward close up to the line held by the Eighty-second Pennsylvania and Sixty-fifth New York, with the purpose of breaking out on Kirby's right and taking his guns in flank. Hampton, however, was here met by a fearful fire from the two regiments which lay behind the pile of fence-rails along the inner edge of the woods. In this desperate assault, which was continued with only slight intervals for an hour and a half, Hampton was soon joined by Pettigrew, while Hatton came in, as soon as he could be brought up, to reinforce the attack at that point and to assail Sully across the open ground at the Courtney House. Whiting's own brigade closed in to the support of Hampton, Pettigrew and Hatton losing heavily. Hood remained farther back, near the railroad.

The advance of the enemy was made, through the dense and tangled woods, with the utmost courage and resolution. Williams' and Cochrane's men held their fire until the advancing line was within twenty yards, when they opened with a volley which threw the enemy back, leaving a windrow of dead and wounded men to mark the line of their farthest advance. Meanwhile, Kirby, with his three Napoleons, and Fagan, with his two Parrotts, had not ceased, from the moment they first opened, to pour their shot right oblique into the woods, in which the enemy were now closely massed. One of Kirby's guns had the trail broken, on its fourth discharge, and became useless; but this loss was more than made good by the arrival of two more guns of the battery under Woodruff, and, a little later, of the sixth and last piece under French. Kirby now sought to change his position, advancing his left so as to secure a better fire into the woods, the enemy having all disappeared from the open ground. Scarcely had Kirby made the change, when, coincidentally with a renewal of the attack upon the centre, a daring body of Confederates dashed out of the woods, crossed the road, and sought to carry the battery on the run. Kirby's cannoneers received them with double charges of cannister from the light twelves; but, for a moment, the Sixty-second New York, which was lying in support, behind the battery, wavered. Their colonel, Riker, dashed to the front, setting an example of heroic bravery, falling dead close to the woods, while General Couch in person brought up the companies that had faltered and restored the line. The Confederates, some of whom were killed within fifteen yards of the guns, fell back before the charges of cannister and the steady fire of musketry poured into them by the infantry, but still held the road, and from behind walls and stumps of trees maintained their fire. Kirby at once sought to ad-

vance his pieces, but the guns sank so deeply into the mire that only two could be pushed forward, and these only through the assistance of details from the Fifteenth Massachusetts. "At one time," says Kirby in his report, "three pieces were up to their axles in the mud, their trails being buried to a corresponding distance." Meanwhile, Sully's Minnesotians had thrown off the attacks of Hutton, at the Courtney House; and Williams and Cochrane (the latter supported that day by two of the best soldiers of the army—Alexander Shaler, Lieutenant-Colonel, and Joseph H. Hamblin, Major), had again beaten back the determined charges made upon their pile of fence-rails.

The time had come for aggressive action on Sumner's part. Burns' brigade was now all up. The Sixty-ninth and Seventy-first Pennsylvania had been sent, under Burns himself, to anticipate any movement from the enemy to outflank Sully on his right; the Seventy-second and One-hundred-and-Sixth were ordered to the Adams House, as a reserve. Of Dana's brigade, two regiments, the Twentieth Massachusetts and Seventh Michigan, had also arrived, the other two having been left behind—the Nineteenth Massachusetts on picket, the Forty-second New York to protect and assist the passage of the artillery over the Chickahominy. With these troops in hand, Sumner now requested General Sedgwick to proceed to the right of the line, to exercise general supervision of the troops under Sully and Burns, while Couch should command the centre, and he himself should take charge of the left. Here, that is, on the extreme left, beyond the Adams House, he proceeded to form a line of battle to be thrown forward directly to the front, at right angles to that formed by Couch's regiments and the First Minnesota. For this purpose Sumner ordered up the Thirty-fourth and Eighty-second New York and Fifteenth Massachusetts, of Gorman's

brigade, and the Seventh Michigan and Twentieth Massachusetts, of Dana's. As soon as the line was formed, the order to charge was given. Two fences intervened between them and the foe; but these were hastily torn down or pushed over. Our men at first ad-



vanced firing; but they gathered inspiration as they went, and when within fifty yards of the position where the foe still sullenly held the ground, outside the woods, they spontaneously broke into a cheer; a sharp clatter along the line told that bayonets were fixed, and the five regiments, in one long line, sprang forward.

It was enough. The enemy, who had had three of their large brigades massed in the woods, the whole edge of which was covered by three of our regiments, had suffered fearfully from the crossing fires to which they had been for an hour and a half subjected—the direct fire of the Eighty-second and Sixty-fifth, the left oblique fire of Sully's men, the rapid and effective right oblique fire of the artillery. One thousand one hundred and seventy-four Confederates had fallen, killed or wounded, including three general officers. General Hatton had been killed; General Pettigrew had fallen seriously wounded; General Hampton was also severely wounded, though he still kept his horse. General Whiting, the division commander, remained alone unwounded.

And now, when, in addition to the *feu d'enfer* to which these brigades had been subjected, they found themselves exposed to the charge of Gorman's and Dana's men across the front of the line they had so bravely but vainly assaulted, they gave back. General Pettigrew, recovering from his swoon, found himself a prisoner in our hands, and was brought in to the Adams House, which straightway became a hospital; three field officers, with a hundred or more of men, with one or perhaps two colors, were brought in.

It is small wonder that the Union army should speak of the action of May 31st as the battle of Fair Oaks, for at that end of the line—the right—our troops were brilliantly successful. It is no wonder at all that the Confederates should term it the battle of Seven Pines, since on that field—the left—they captured our lines of fortifications, with prisoners, guns, and colors.

The credit of the brilliant action on the right must always be fairly divided between the regiments of Sumner and those of Couch. It was the Eighty-second Pennsyl-

vania and the Sixty-fifth New York which so firmly held the centre against so many assaults,¹ and whose direct fire inflicted the greatest portion of the heavy loss which the Confederates sustained; and Fagan's guns were served courageously and effectively side by side with Kirby's. At the same time, no language can exaggerate the splendid enthusiasm with which the Second Corps, from its lion-like commander to the humblest private in the ranks, overcame the difficulties which beset the crossing of the swollen Chickahominy, pressed up the road from Grapevine Bridge to Fair Oaks, and encountered a superior force of the enemy in what was to many of them their first battle. The Thirty-fourth and Eighty-second New York and the Seventh Michigan had sustained the heaviest losses among Sedgwick's regiments.

The charge of Gorman's and Dana's five regiments across the front of our main line closed the action of the day, not because more fighting could not easily have been had out of Smith's column, but because night had now come on. The Confederates had, indeed, retired from our end of the woods; but they still held² on to

¹ General G. W. Smith's report says: "Very seldom, if ever, did any troops in their first battle go so close up to a covered line under so strong a fire, or remain within such short distance so long a time" (991).

² General G. W. Smith says: "On no part of the line where I was did the enemy at any time leave their cover or advance one single foot. Our troops held their position close to the enemy's line until it was too dark to distinguish friend from foe." It would be interesting to learn in what manner, if our troops did not "advance one single foot," General Pettigrew, Colonel Lightfoot, and Lieutenant-Colonels Long and Bull were brought into the Union lines; or what scientific phraseology would be used to describe the movement of Gorman's and Dana's regiments, for they certainly did move forward in some way.

those nearer to Fair Oaks Station, which they occupied in force, Hood's Texans having been called in from the right, and Griffith's Mississippians and Semmes' mixed brigade from the left, to support the four roughly-handled brigades which had done the work of the late afternoon.

General Smith and, following him, General Johnston himself have expressed the opinion that, if daylight had lasted one hour longer, the Confederates, thus reinforced, would have won a decided victory, and driven Sumner and Couch "into the swamps of the Chickahominy." It is difficult, especially in war, to tell what might have resulted if something had happened or been done totally different from what happened or was done; but I know of no reason for supposing that to protract the day of May 31st by one, two, or three hours would have been disastrous to the Union forces on the right. In the fighting up to dark, on that end of the line, only nine regiments had been engaged on the Union side—three of Couch's, viz., the Sixty-second and Sixty-fifth New York and the Eighty-second Pennsylvania (the Seventh Massachusetts had been sent toward the left to open communication, if possible, with the troops at Seven Pines); and six of Sedgwick's, viz., the Thirty-fourth and Eighty-second New York, Fifteenth and Twentieth Massachusetts, Seventh Michigan, and First Minnesota. These nine regiments had lost less than four hundred men. Not a regiment had been shattered, had been tried to the utmost, had had the fight taken out of it. On the other hand, the heavy losses of the four Confederate brigades, especially among the superior officers, and that, too, in a losing fight, is sufficient proof that the enemy actually engaged would only have renewed the contest with a certain and a considerable loss of impetus.

So much for the troops on the ground when fighting ceased. As for the three new brigades which might have been brought into action, had there been an hour more of daylight, as Generals Johnston and Smith suggest, the comparison is even less favorable to the chances of a Confederate victory. Had Hood's brigade been thrown in on the Confederate right, it would simply have been crushed between the brigade of Birney, already in position along the railroad, supported by the column of Hooker, rapidly coming up the track, and the troops at the Adams House, resting after their victorious charge. On the other hand, Griffith's and Semmes' brigades, attempting our right, would have found, not only Sully's Minnesotians and Burns' Pennsylvanians on the ground, but Richardson's brigades also, crowding up the road from Grapevine Bridge. People are often dreadfully mistaken in war, but there was no price which Sumner, Couch, Sedgwick, and Richardson would not have jointly or severally paid for two hours more of daylight on May 31st. Hence, as seen from our side, there was certainly some "doubt" whether in one hour more General Gustavus W. Smith would have driven the union force "into the swamps of the Chickahominy." By eight o'clock Sumner had on the ground, available for action, twenty-three regiments (including Couch's), against the nine which had actually encountered the enemy.

¹ "By this time, the strong position the enemy had defended was better understood; and there is no reason to doubt that Hood's brigade of Texans upon the right, and Griffith's of Mississippi on the left, supported by the brigade of General Semmes, would have enabled us, in one short hour more of daylight, to drive the enemy into the swamps of the Chickahominy" (Smith's Report). The "strength" of the position defended has been sufficiently accounted for. It resided chiefly in the good regiments

THE SECOND DAY.

The night of the 31st of May to June 1st was passed by the troops of Sedgwick's division with the bodies of the slain around them, and with the groans of the wounded in their ears. As night fell the division of Richardson began to arrive upon the field and take position on the left of Sedgwick, extending toward Birney's brigade, while Hooker, coming up to the support of the beaten troops on the Williamsburg Road, too late to go into action, filled the vacant spaces in the line. There were now three corps across the Chickahominy in continuous order, ready for action when day should dawn. Had those three corps been in place at noon of the 31st, Johnston would have attacked only to suffer an overwhelming defeat. Of the six divisions which rose at daybreak, to renew the conflict, only two had been in position to resist the fury of Hill's and Longstreet's assault between one and four o'clock; another was able to get up, at the last-named hour, to the support of the already beaten troops on the Williamsburg Road; a fourth only arrived on the ground at five, in season, however, to rescue Couch and Abercrombie from their perilous position at the Adams House, and to inflict a stinging defeat upon the column of G. W. Smith under the very eye of the Confederate commander-in-chief. Two divisions were absolutely fresh, Richardson's of the Second Corps and Hooker's of the Third.

But though the three Union corps arose from their

which lay behind the rails of an ordinary Virginia fence, thrown down to make a breastwork some inches high, the only defensive feature, natural or artificial, of the position occupied by Sumner or Couch that day.

bivouac, on the morning of the 1st of June, expecting to try conclusions with the whole force of the enemy, that enemy, even if disposed to renew the conflict, had made no adequate preparations therefor. Thousands of the bravest of the Confederate host had fallen on the battle-field at Seven Pines, or before the murderous fire of Sedgwick and Couch at Fair Oaks; while their great chief, Joseph E. Johnston, had been disabled by a serious wound, and compelled to relinquish the command to Major-General G. W. Smith. The latter general was, however, neither in ability nor in prestige, equal to such a momentous charge; and he was, on the afternoon of this very day, to be relieved by that staunchest of the defenders of the Southern cause, General Robert E. Lee. Meanwhile, however, somebody was required to decide for the Confederate divisions whether they were or were not to fight; someone was required to withdraw them if they were not to fight, or to put them in strongly and in concert if another effort was to be made to drive McClellan's left wing, now reinforced by the centre, into the swamps of the Chickahominy. General Smith, however, seems not to have been quite up to the task thus unexpectedly devolved upon him. There was no reason at all why the Confederates should not have been withdrawn to their entrenchments during the night, if they were not to resume the aggressive on a large scale in the morning. To stay outside their fortified lines, otherwise, was to incur an unnecessary risk. For all General Smith could know, either Franklin's or Porter's corps, or both of them, might have been brought over Sumner's bridge; in which case the Confederate army, outside its entrenchments, would have sustained an attack at a serious risk, a risk worth taking, perhaps, for a distinct object, but not to be excused if taken for no pur-

pose at all. If, on the other hand, General Smith's plans involved a renewal of the attack of the 31st, as his report intimates,¹ no adequate arrangements had been made for rendering that attack effective ; the actual encounter was left to accident, and the troops thus engaged were not only not properly supported, but assistance which was at their very elbows, on right and left, was withheld from them for no reason at all.

But there were not wanting grounds for complaint as to the way in which the functions of the commander of the Union army were exercised. With troops to many of whom it was to be their first battle, under corps commanders picked from the colonels of the regular army, and staff officers almost absolutely raw and uninstructed, it will always seem strange that General McClellan did not feel that his place was with the half of his army that was to fight, rather than with that half which was not to fight. Before half past two o'clock of Saturday afternoon General McClellan had reason to apprehend that his left wing had been attacked by at least double their own force. The despatch of Sumner's corps did not establish equality of numbers, and could not restore what had been lost in the first shock of Hill's and Longstreet's assault. Had Huger emerged from White Oak Swamp, upon our left and rear, it is certain that the fall of night would have found the Union army in a very much worse condition than it actually did, perhaps in a state border-

¹ "General Longstreet was directed to push his successes of the previous day as far as practicable, pivoting his movement upon the position of General Whiting on his left. The latter was directed to make a diversion in favor of General Longstreet's real attack ; and, if pressed by the enemy, hold at all hazards the fork or junction of the New Bridge and Nine Mile Roads" (G. W. Smith's report).

ing on absolute destruction. Yet the fate of the army across the Chickahominy was left, in such an emergency, to the three corps commanders then present, the same three who, at Williamsburg, had acted so inharmoniously—corps commanders, not one of whom had been of General McClellan's own choice; two of whom he had accepted most reluctantly upon President Lincoln's nomination, and toward one, at least, of whom he had exhibited a constantly growing dislike and distrust ever since the army left Fort Monroe. Neither General McClellan's personal bravery nor his earnest, affectionate devotion to his soldiers is for a moment to be called in question; but his adherence to European methods of handling an army, suitable enough in a cleared country of good roads, with thoroughly disciplined and indurated troops, under veteran colonels and veteran brigadiers, with generals of division and of corps who had fought their way up, through many campaigns, to positions of great authority and power, assisted by numerous staffs of the most skilled and accomplished officers in the service, was the source of great weakness in the case of such an army, in such conditions and with such a history, as the Army of the Potomac.

But whatever may be said of General McClellan's not being on the field during the afternoon of the 31st, it would certainly seem that he should have come up during the night, to give to his three corps on the Richmond side of the river the benefit of his wise counsel and skilful direction, the impulse to be derived from his immense popularity with the troops, and the harmony and unity of action which alone the presence of the commander-in-chief could secure. Neither Franklin's nor Porter's corps was to be engaged that day; this was already definitely settled. They could not attack the

enemy if they would ; nor could the enemy possibly attack them that day. The fifty thousand men on the right bank needed a commander, the wisest, most skilful, most popular, most authoritative that could be had.

In the absence of such directions from above, the dispositions made by General Sumner for the day of June 1st were as follows : It being necessary to secure the communications with the bridges, General Burns was sent back with the Seventy-first Pennsylvania, of his own brigade, to Golding's, near the river, where he was to take command of the Nineteenth Massachusetts and Forty-second New York, of Dana's brigade, and of the Sixty-third New York, of Meagher's brigade of Richardson's division, to protect the right and rear. The remaining troops of Sedgwick's division held positions somewhat advanced from those of the previous afternoon, covering the Adams and Courtney Houses. The artillery having been brought up, with infinite pains, from the river bottom, sometimes one gun only of a battery arriving at a time upon the field, was placed as follows : Tompkins', and two sections of Bartlett's, at the Courtney House ; Kirby's battery, reinforced at seven o'clock by one section of Owen's, was held in reserve at the Adams House, the other two sections of Owen's being with General Burns at Golding's ; while the remaining section of Bartlett's was ordered from the Adams House to near Fair Oaks Station, becoming the only portion of the division artillery that day engaged with the enemy. Colonel Charles H. Tompkins, an accomplished and gallant officer, had command of the artillery of this division.

Richardson's division had during the night been disposed as follows : French's brigade along the railroad, extended from Sedgwick toward, but not to, Birney's brigade, the nearest of the troops of the Third Corps upon

the left. French's front was covered by Cross' Fifth New Hampshire Regiment, of Howard's brigade, as an advance guard. The remaining three regiments of Howard formed the second line. Meagher's brigade, weakened by the detachment of the Sixty-third New York at Golding's, was in the third line. The division artillery was thus disposed : Pettit's battery had reached the field at 4.30 A.M., and was placed on the road running north from Fair Oaks Station, covering the broad space of open ground extending west and southwest from nine hundred to fifteen hundred yards. Frank's battery was placed two hundred yards in rear and at right angles to Pettit's, to meet the enemy should he advance from the woods which lined the south side of the railroad. Hazzard's battery was placed in reserve ; but subsequently four pieces (12-pounders) were moved south to the railroad to shell Casey's old camp. Captain George W. Hazzard, Fourth United States, commanded the artillery of this division.

At three o'clock of Sunday, June 1st, the Fifth New Hampshire was quietly withdrawn from its post as advance guard ; and the next two hours were passed by French's brigade under arms in silence. With daylight, an extensive gap between Richardson and Birney appearing, Richardson moved French to the left the length of three battalions, and sent one of Howard's regiments, Miller's Eighty-first Pennsylvania, still farther to the left, the Fifth New Hampshire going into the second line. These new dispositions, and the forming connection with Birney's right, carried Richardson's front line forward across the railroad into swampy ground covered by a thick growth of timber. Whether it was this movement which brought our troops into collision with the enemy, or whether the latter were at that moment advancing to

begin the attack, is not wholly clear. General Johnston, in his official report, says that the Union troops were the assailants. General Longstreet speaks of his position being attacked on Sunday morning. Pickett, to whom he refers in that connection, speaks in his official report of being ordered by General D. H. Hill to attack. He says he supposed the same order was given to other brigade commanders. Hill himself speaks of sending orders to draw in his advanced brigades, Pickett's, Pryor's, and Wilcox's; but adds that, "before the orders were received, a furious attack was made upon Generals Armistead, Mahone, Pickett, Pryor, and Wilcox." Richardson's own report, on our side, speaks of being attacked; and that is the explanation of the opening of the battle always given by the troops of that division. McClellan, Sumner, and Heintzelman alike speak of the enemy as beginning the attack; and yet it appears that D. H. Hill, commanding the Confederate brigades engaged, did not know of it, and declares that he was in the act of withdrawing his troops at the moment when they were assaulted.

Whoever began it, the action broke out in fury between half past six and seven on Sunday morning. French's whole line was instantly involved, and that veteran officer fought his command with energy and intrepidity. The Fifty-second New York suffered severely both in front and from an attempt of the enemy to turn its flank, losing one hundred and twenty men, including eight officers. Further to the right, Zook—the Zook of Gettysburg—shook off the fiercest attacks upon his front, with the Fifty-seventh New York supported by Pinckney of the Sixty-sixth. At the head of his own good regiment, the Eighty-first Pennsylvania, of Howard's brigade, fell the gallant Miller. On the left, Col-

onel John R. Brooke, leading the Fifty-third Pennsylvania for the first time into fight, displayed that cool daring, that readiness of resource, that firmness of temper, which were to raise him high among the most illustrious of the young soldiers of the Union, while his splendid regiment responded to every call with easy courage and prompt manœuvre.

The musketry had continued for an hour without an instant's cessation, extending now toward the left, to involve Hooker's division of the Third Corps, of which Sickles' brigade and the Fifth and Sixth New Jersey, led by Hooker in person, came enthusiastically into action.

On Richardson's front the two lines were at less than half smooth-bore range, when Richardson, learning that the regiments which had been engaged were getting out of ammunition, directed Howard to relieve French. Howard, putting himself at the head of the Sixty-first New York, Colonel Barlow,¹ and the Sixty-fourth, Colonel Parker, advanced up the railroad till he reached the position of Brooke, when he moved to the front, Brooke's men, whose cartridge-boxes were empty, lying down to let them pass. Coming into action, Howard at once advanced as rapidly as the dense, tangled, and swampy woods would permit, until he had pressed the enemy back across the road into Casey's camps of Saturday morning. At this point Howard's horse was killed, and the general himself struck down by a blow which cost him his good right arm. Giving to Colonel Barlow, who had already shown, in this his first fight, those quali-

¹ Colonel Cone, of the Sixty-First, had been dismissed the service, March 14th, and had been succeeded in the colonelcy of the regiment by Francis C. Barlow, afterward Major-General of Volunteers.

ties which were so soon to render him conspicuous in the sight of the whole army, orders to hold his position until reinforced, Howard went to the rear ; there he turned over the command to Colonel Cross of the Fifth New Hampshire ; but that officer, also, was soon severely wounded, devolving the command of the brigade upon Colonel Parker, of the Sixty-fourth. Even before taking the Sixty-first and Sixty-fourth to the front, General Howard had learned that Colonel Miller, of the Eighty-first Pennsylvania, had been killed, and that one wing of his regiment, left without a field officer, had become separated from the other ; whereupon General Howard directed his aid, Lieutenant Nelson A. Miles, to collect the companies of that wing, and with them hold the open field on the right of the railroad against any advance of the enemy from that direction. Thus, again, we meet, in the narrative of this short fight, the name of a young officer, new to war, who was destined to win renown.

Barlow, finding that his advance had carried him beyond supports, soon called up Brooke, who, having replenished his ammunition, took post with Barlow on the borders of Casey's old camp. There was now a lull in the fighting, the enemy's troops first engaged having apparently had enough, and being well disposed to remain quiet and await reinforcements. As far as it is possible to correlate the Confederate and Union reports, I understand that Armistead's Confederate brigade had given way in great disorder. General D. H. Hill also charges that Mahone withdrew his brigade from action without orders, and that Colston, when sent forward to take Mahone's place, did not go into action as he was expected. Meanwhile, General Richardson took occasion of the lull in the battle to send forward the Fifth

New Hampshire, the Sixty-ninth New York, Colonel Robert Nugent, and the Eighty-eighth New York, Lieutenant-Colonel Patrick Kelly, to relieve the Fifty-Second and Sixty-first New York and Fifty-third Pennsylvania on the front line.

On the left, General Hooker made fresh dispositions to push his advantage; and Birney's brigade, under Colonel J. H. Hobart Ward,¹ was brought up and advanced toward the enemy. Scarcely were these changes completed, when the attack was renewed with considerable vivacity by, it would seem, the brigades of Pickett, Pryor, and Wilcox. Two of the three brigades were perfectly fresh, not having been engaged on Saturday, and behaved with extraordinary spirit and gallantry. But the action now was nearly over. General D. H. Hill, disgusted with the behavior of Armistead's brigade, and offended by the action of Generals Mahone and Colston, determined to withdraw his troops.

In this the divisions of Richardson and Hooker co-operated to the utmost of their ability. On the left, Sickles' "Excelsior" brigade and the two New Jersey regiments under Hooker; on the centre, Birney's brigade under Ward; on the right, the Fifth New Hampshire and the Sixty-ninth and Eighty-eighth New York pressed forward together to clear the ground; the Thirty-fourth and Eighty-second New York, of Sedgwick's division, were sent in to reinforce Richardson; while, on the extreme flank, General French swung around the Fifty-seventh and Sixty-sixth New York, both under Colonel Pinckney, until they were formed almost at right angles

¹ General Heintzelman had been very much dissatisfied with General Birney's conduct on the evening previous, and, at about eight o'clock, on June 1st, placed him in arrest. General Birney was subsequently tried by court-martial and honorably acquitted.

to the general line, and then led them forward in person to charge across the front of the other regiments of the division. At the same time, Pettit advanced his guns to a point where he obtained an enfilade on the enemy, who were still resisting the Irish regiments.

That settled it. The Confederates had, at break of day, scarcely resolved, in their divided councils, whether to fight or not ; but as soon as the first shot was fired, the brigades nearest at hand turned, with or without orders, in all the surly courage of their kind, to return the blow. But the lengthening line of the Union forces, as Richardson gave one hand to Sedgwick and the other to Hooker, and the increasing weight of our fire were at last bringing into serious jeopardy the brigades of Pickett, Pryor, and Wilcox, actually deserted as they had been by some of the troops designated to support them ; while on their left Hood had received positive orders to make no movement, and only to fight if himself attacked. Thus, though Mahone's brigade and two of Colston's regiments have now been brought up, the Confederates withdraw before our advancing lines. The Fifty-seventh and Sixty-sixth, moving forward without firing, encounter only a single regiment (the Forty-first Virginia), which easily gives way, and the battle of June 1st is over.

That battle ought really never to have been fought, for it had no purpose, no plan of action, no place in any scheme of operations. It is a question, to this day, which was the attacking party. On the Confederate side, the lack of co-ordination, which made their fighting so desultory and so ineffectual, was due to the great overshadowing fact that the commander-in-chief, probably the best soldier in the Confederate service, had been struck down on the 31st. On the Union side there was equal lack of commandership. Sumner and Heintzelman were certain

to fight, and to defend each his own line stoutly, if attacked ; but of that serene intelligence and that supreme authority which should preside over the varying fortunes of a battle, whether to anticipate the causes of disaster, or to push success instantly to its utmost possibilities, there was none.

But, to the troops engaged, the action of June 1st was highly creditable. Richardson's division, for the first time in battle, displayed not only courage and endurance under trying conditions, but also that capacity of free and ready movement to the front, to the flank and to the rear, according to orders, which was to distinguish this gallant body of troops to the end of the war.

The casualties in the division had been 838, of which 557 occurred in Howard's stubborn brigade, the Fifth New Hampshire losing 180 ; the Sixty-first New York, 110 ; the Sixty-fourth New York, 173 ; the Eighty-first Pennsylvania, 91, one-half of the last number being prisoners. The Irish brigade lost but 39 men. French's Third brigade lost 242, more than half from the Fifty-second New York, the Fifty-third Pennsylvania losing 94.

The officers killed or mortally wounded, were Colonel James Miller and Lieutenant Horace M. Lee, Eighty-first Pennsylvania ; Lieutenant-Colonel W. C. Massett, Captains James J. Trenor, Arthur L. Brooks and Eugene M. Deming, and Lieutenants William McIntire and William H. Coultis, all of the Sixty-first New York ; Major Thomas Yeager, Fifty-third Pennsylvania ; Lieutenant Timothy King, Eighty-eighth New York ; Lieutenant Ezra W. Kendall, Sixty-fourth New York ; Lieutenant Albert Pfantz, Fifty-second New York.

Among the wounded were Brigadier-General Howard ; Colonel Cross, Fifth New Hampshire ; Lieutenant-Colonel Bingham, Sixty-fourth New York ; Major Cook,

Fifth New Hampshire; Captain Fisk, Assistant Adjutant-General to General French.

Neither the first nor the second day's action, in which the Second Corps participated at Fair Oaks, was of the nature of desperate battle. In each affair the division engaged had driven its antagonist from the field, without itself being shattered or suffering very heavy losses.

A more favorable initiation for the severe after-work of the Second Corps could scarcely have been asked by its commander. The officers and men of the two divisions came to know themselves and each other, through an introduction in which all had gained honor; while the soldierly promptitude with which Sumner had, on the first sound of battle, hurried the heads of his columns down to rest upon the very bridges, in anticipation of the order to cross, won for him and his corps the gratitude of the hard-pressed troops of Keyes and Heintzelman and the admiration of the whole army. Moreover, out of the smoke of that Sunday-morning battle arose the figures, in unmistakable outlines, of some of the most illustrious heroes of the war. Of the commanders of the three brigades of the First Division, two were to become commanders, first of divisions, within the Second Corps, and afterwards of other corps, while one was destined to rise to the command of a separate army. Of the colonels then for the first time engaged in action against the enemy, Brooke, Cross, Nugent, Barlow, Zook, could never thereafter fail to be marked men; while a young lieutenant on the staff that day, fresh from civil life, showed there, to the admiration of all beholders, that address and gallantry which were to secure a promotion of unexampled rapidity, and to make the name of Nelson A. Miles the pride of the volunteer soldiers of the Union.

CHAPTER III.

THE PENINSULA : THE SEVEN DAYS.

AFTER Sumner crossed the Chickahominy to take part in the action at Fair Oaks, there was no thought of withdrawing him to the left bank. His two divisions were put into the line confronting the Confederate entrenchments. Heintzelman, who had been brought up from the rear, to the relief of the overwhelmed divisions of Keyes, on May 31st, had taken position in the front, in advance of Seven Pines; while Couch's division of Keyes' corps was held in immediate support, and Casey's badly handled division, to the command of which Peck had succeeded, was sent back to protect Bottom's Bridge and the numerous crossings of White Oak Swamp, upon the Union left and rear.

Connecting with Heintzelman, in the front, was the Second Corps, resting on Fair Oaks, while Franklin's corps, which also had been thrown across the river, by the new engineer bridges, extended the line to the river bank, at Golding's, from which point Porter, remaining on the other side of the Chickahominy, with his two original divisions, commanded by Sykes and Morell, now reinforced by the newly arrived division (First Corps) of Pennsylvania Reserves, under McCall, covered the communications with White House, on the Pamunkey River, from which, by rail, the supplies of the army were drawn. Porter's command extended up the left bank of the Chickahominy as far as Mechanicsville.

During the weeks that intervened between Fair Oaks and the memorable "Seven Days," Richardson's division, which had originally been the smaller of the two divisions of the Second Corps, and which had lost the more heavily at Fair Oaks, was reinforced by three regiments, viz., the German Seventh New York, sometimes called the Steuben Regiment, Colonel George Van Schack; the Twenty-ninth Massachusetts, Colonel Ebenezer W. Pierce, and the Second Delaware, Colonel Henry W. Wharton. Russell's company of Sharpshooters from Minnesota also joined at this time, and was assigned to the First Brigade of the Second Division. It is not a little amusing to recall the feelings of superiority with which the troops that had been in action at Fair Oaks greeted those that had not; how inexpressibly raw the latter seemed to the former; how great was the distance between the two: a distance that was, in but a few days, to be lost sight of, as both the Fair Oaks veterans and the new recruits were thrown into the boiling waves of that great strife known as the Seven Days' Battles, to emerge, on the other shore, at Harrison's Landing, to be thereafter comrades and equals to the end.

Of these regiments, the Seventh New York was assigned to the First Brigade, the Twenty-ninth Massachusetts to the Second (Irish) Brigade, the Second Delaware to the Third Brigade, to which also the Sixty-fourth New York was transferred from the First Brigade. The first two brigades were thus left four regiments strong, while the Third Brigade had the strength of six regiments. A Corps artillery reserve, was also formed, consisting of Rhode Island Batteries B and G, and of Battery G, First New York. Companies D, F, and H, Sixth New York Cavalry, reinforced Company K, at corps headquarters.

During the interval in view, Brigadier-General John C. Caldwell, late Colonel of the Eleventh Maine Volunteers, of Casey's division, reported for duty and was assigned to the command of the First Brigade of Richardson's division. While holding its lines in front and to the right of Fair Oaks through the early days of June, Burns' brigade had a pretty warm time, losing on the skirmish line, Lieutenant Maurice C. Moore, Seventy-first Pennsylvania, killed June 8th, and Captain Martin C. Frost, One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania, killed June 9th. Lieutenant-Colonel William L. Curry, of the One Hundred and Sixth, was, at about this time, captured in a skirmish.

It does not fall within the scope of this narrative to describe the miserable causes which led to the failure of the Peninsula campaign: the successful efforts of the Confederate chiefs so to play upon the fears of the administration at Washington as to prevent the reinforcement of McClellan's army by the powerful corps of McDowell, numbering thirty-five thousand men; the great raid of Stonewall Jackson into the Valley, and his successive defeats of the petty armies, under more petty commanders, which the mischievous meddling of the politicians had caused to be constituted, ostensibly for the defence of the capital. Of all this the Army of the Potomac was to bear the consequences, unaided. About June 18th, Jackson, leaving behind him sixty thousand Union troops, who were to be as powerless to intervene in the operations of the next fortnight as if they had never been mustered into the service of the United States, or born into the world, turned his fateful footsteps toward the Chickahominy. With such masterly precaution was his advance veiled from view that, on the 25th, his column reached Ashland on the Richmond & Fredericks-

burg Railroad, without warning having been given of his coming, or even of his having left the Valley.

On that very day McClellan had begun his long-promised advance against the Confederate works, through a partial movement known as "Hooker's advance of the lines." This took place immediately in front of Seven Pines, and was directed toward the ultimate occupation of the plateau of Old Tavern. In the action which ensued, sometimes called the battle of Oak Grove, Hooker was supported by a brigade from each of Couch's and Richardson's divisions. During this action, the Nineteenth Massachusetts, Colonel Hinks, of Sedgwick's division, which had been advanced in front of the division line, was subjected to an attack by a body of the enemy, apparently sent out to make a diversion in favor of the troops opposing Hooker's advance, in which that regiment behaved with great spirit and held its ground through severe losses, until withdrawn under orders. In this action, Lieutenant Charles B. Warner was killed.

But on the same day, and, indeed, even during the progress of the action in front of Seven Pines, intelligence reached General McClellan which showed conclusively that he was about to be called to meet a formidable movement around his right flank and against his communications with the Pamunkey and the York. The issue presented by this news was of tremendous consequence and demanded instant decision. Jackson's corps from "The Valley," and all the troops which could be drawn from the intrenchments in front of Richmond, were to be hurled against three divisions of Porter's corps, on the left bank of the Chickahominy; and, if successful in their attack, were then to be pushed across the railroad to White House, cutting McClellan off from his supplies. It would appear that Lee took it for granted that Mc-

Clellan would resist this movement to the last with all his available force. It further appears that Lee only contemplated, in case of his own success, a retreat of the Army of the Potomac down the Peninsula. McClellan, however, determined not to fight for his communications with the Pamunkey and the York; but to move in exactly the opposite direction, to seek a new base of operations on the James, which river is one boundary of the Peninsula, of which the York and Pamunkey form the other.

It will doubtless always be disputed whether McClellan should have fought for his communications, hoping that, in the event of victory, the terrible fright experienced by the administration at Washington would, once for all, put an end to the trifling which had detained McDowell's corps, and had left useless several small armies in the Valley; and that, thus reinforced upon his right, he might be able to enter Richmond from the northeast, as he had originally planned; trusting, on the other hand, that in the event of defeat he would still be able to effect his retreat to the James. That McClellan could have opposed to any force which Lee might move against his right and rear an equal number of men, having the advantage of fighting on the defensive and behind at least temporary fortifications, while leaving before Richmond a well entrenched force, equal or superior to that which Lee should leave in his own works; (2) that the two Union armies, thus formed, would have remained in close and intimate communication, so that one might reinforce the other across the bridges by a short march, while Lee's two armies would have been separated by a long distance and could not reinforce each other except through an all-day and all-night march; (3) that in the event of Lee's left wing being badly defeated or even only foiled, across the

river, so far from its entrenchments, a vigorous aggression on the part of the Union commander would have put that wing in serious jeopardy, and have made more than ever feasible the projected attack on Richmond from the north-east, or by way of Old Tavern; (4) that in the event of Lee's right wing assuming the initiative and being badly defeated or even no worse repulsed than finally at Seven Pines, the Union forces would have had a fair chance to follow them into Richmond, by the Williamsburg road; (5) that in the event of the Union right being defeated, even as badly as it actually was at Gaines' Mill, the choice would still have remained to retreat down the Peninsula or to the James; (6) that even in the event of both wings of the Union army being defeated in one day's fighting, the right, as badly as it actually was at Gaines' Mill, the left, as badly as it had been at Seven Pines, on May 31st, there would still have been a fair fighting chance to concentrate the army around Savage Station, on June 28th, and then to push for the James, or at the worst to retreat down the Peninsula: that this was the real situation upon which McClellan was called to look, on the evening of June 25th, we now know.

But McClellan in this instance, as elsewhere, overestimated his adversary's strength. This is the point to which the hostile criticism of his military career must chiefly be directed. This was the prime cause of his defeat on the Peninsula and of his comparative failure in Maryland. The Comte de Paris, then his staff officer, assures us that, on the occasion we have described, McClellan believed that Jackson's arrival would swell Lee's army to 160,000 men, and that, consequently, to oppose an adequate force to the movement against his right, he would be obliged so to strip his left as to expose it to be crushed in and run over by heavy columns emerging from

the Confederate works. It was in this mistaken view of his adversary's numbers that McClellan decided not to fight for his communications, but to retreat to the James River.

Yet, though the Union commander decided not to fight for his communications, it was still necessary that, to carry out the projected retreat to the James, he should fight on the left bank of the Chickahominy. The enormous artillery and trains of such an army could not be pushed to the left and rear across the White Oak Swamp rapidly enough to allow the retirement of Porter from his exposed position, in season to escape a collision with the turning columns. This necessity led to the battle of Mechanicsville, or Beaver Dam Creek, on June 26th, and to the greater battle of Gaines' Mill, on the 27th.

On the first named day Jackson, with his Valley troops, crossing the Chickahominy, high up, marched directly for the West Point Railway. A. P. Hill, at the head of a column of about equal strength, drawn from the entrenchments of Richmond, crossing at Meadow Bridge, under the eyes of Lee and Davis, pushed back the Union outposts, and, turning sharply down the stream, came, late in the afternoon, upon the division of McCall, strongly posted upon the left bank of Beaver Dam Creek, a tributary of the Chickahominy. To attack the position in front was useless, since Jackson's turning movement would soon inevitably compel its abandonment; but the Confederate troops and Confederate commander were full of ardor, and a vehement assault was delivered, which was repulsed with great slaughter.

During the night, McCall's division was drawn back, and the three divisions under Porter were concentrated in a partially fortified position at Gaines' Mill, covering

the bridges over the Chickahominy, which connected the Union right with the left. Here Porter awaited the enemy. About one o'clock A. P. Hill, coming straight down from the scene of yesterday's battle, attacked smartly with his own division and was repulsed. Two hours or more later, joined by Longstreet, he renewed the attack with fury, and a battle of extraordinary fierceness raged until five o'clock. Into this had come, just in the nick of time, Slocum's fine division of the Sixth Corps, which had crossed the river from Golding's. Porter commanded the action with peerless address and gallantry; and his troops fought with a courage and tenacity which showed what might have been the end of the day had numbers been equal. But all this time a powerful enemy was steadily marching toward the battle-field, to change the fortune of the day and to render futile the valor of the Union forces. Jackson had found no one to oppose his movement toward the railroad, and divining the situation at the sound of Hill's guns, he had turned toward Cold Harbor. Thirty-three thousand Union troops were soon to be called to resist the united Confederate columns, numbering sixty thousand; while, across the river, seven divisions confronted Richmond, where Magruder, with barely twenty-five thousand men, was doing his best, with the same audacity he had displayed at Yorktown, to keep up the illusion of McClellan that Lee had still in his entrenchments at least eighty thousand men.

At last the blow falls. Shortly before six o'clock Jackson hurls his fresh divisions into the fight. The Confederate fire extends rapidly around our right; everywhere the contest rages with rekindled fury; brigades, already thrice repulsed, renew the assault; and after a brief but desperate struggle, the Union lines are broken

at all points, and thrown into retreat. Twenty guns have been captured ; six thousand men have fallen ; only a little space intervenes between the victorious Confederates and the river which runs behind Porter's beaten corps. Duane's and Woodbury's bridges have been hopelessly lost ; but it is a "far cry" still to Alexander's Bridge, for some gallant troops form upon the last crest and face the foe with unfaltering resolution ; forty pieces of artillery turn their ugly muzzles north ; while, cool and collected as on parade, Porter orders everything for a stern resistance to the bitter end. And now an unaccustomed cheer rises along the slender Union line. It is the cheer of men overweighted and worn, when they learn that help is at hand. Mingled with it is the easily distinguishable cheer of brave men who know that they are sorely wanted, and see that they have come in time. It is a reinforcement from the Second Corps ; two brigades of those which, a month ago, crossed the river in such haste to the relief of Keyes, and now as gladly and as hotly crowd the bridge for Porter's rescue. Good brigades, good men ! There wave the green flags of the Irish regiments of the reckless, rollicking, irrepressible, irresponsible Meagher. Here comes the brigade of French, the grim old artillerist at the head.

"These brigades," says McClellan, "advanced boldly to the front ; and by their example, as well as by the steadiness of their bearing, reanimated our own troops and warned the enemy that reinforcements had arrived. It was now dusk. The enemy, already repulsed several times with terrible slaughter, and hearing the shouts of the fresh troops, failed to follow up their advantage ; and this gave an opportunity to rally our men behind the brigades of Generals French and Meagher, and they again advanced up the hill ready to repulse another attack.

During the night our thin and exhausted regiments were all withdrawn in safety, and by morning all had reached the other side of the stream."

During the withdrawal from the left bank of the Chickahominy the two brigades under General French covered the rear. When the last of the troops had crossed, the Eighty-eighth New York destroyed the bridge. While Porter was thus engaged in furious battle on the left bank of the river, the enemy sought to prevent his reinforcement by sharp and persistent attacks, late in the afternoon of the 27th, upon the front of Smith's division of the Sixth Corps, which held the right bank of the river, that is, on the Richmond side. These attacks fell mainly on Hancock's brigade, which was reinforced by the Fourth and Sixth Vermont and the Second New Jersey. The Fifteenth Massachusetts was also sent over from Sedgwick to report to General Smith. In these attacks the enemy gained no ground, while suffering severe loss.

ALLEN'S FARM AND SAVAGE STATION, JUNE 29TH.

Up to this time the corps of Sumner had taken small part in the fighting of the "Seven Days." A brigade had been despatched to the support of Hooker in his "advance of the lines" on the 25th. During the late afternoon of the 26th the men of the Second from their place in the centre listened anxiously to the pulsations of the distant artillery at Beaver Dam Creek, without so much as receiving an order to be under arms. Even on the 27th only two brigades had been sent to the relief of Porter's hard-pressed men, and these had arrived in season, indeed, to check, by a brave show of force, the enemy's advance upon the bridge, but too late to become themselves engaged. At the same time one regiment

from Sedgwick's division was sent to support Smith's division at Golding's Farm. For the remainder of that bloody week, the Second Corps was to participate more actively, though always, as it chanced, successfully; doing everything assigned it easily, never pressed to its utmost endurance, not so much as once losing blood to fainting. Such was to be the good fortune of the corps in the coming battles.

The day of the 28th of June was, in general, one of quiet and silence. The broken corps of Porter had, before dawn of day, been withdrawn to the left bank of the river; Slocum's division had rejoined Franklin at Golding's; French's and Meagher's brigades had returned to their camps near Fair Oaks. McClellan's whole army had been concentrated on one side of the river; communication with the Pamunkey and the York had been abandoned; the movement to the James had begun, so far as the passage of the almost endless trains was concerned. Yet Lee was still bent upon his original conception of the situation, viz., that McClellan would either gather his forces, and hurl them for a supreme effort upon Hill and Jackson, with a view to regaining lost ground and protecting his communications, or, should he decide to retreat, would retreat down the Peninsula. It was not until late in the afternoon that the movement to the James was conjectured, after Ewell's division had reached Bottom's Bridge from the south, unopposed; and the Confederate cavalry had searched the left bank of the Chickahominy to its mouth, without finding any signs of our infantry.

Thus a day was lost to Lee and gained by McClellan, time of infinite importance in operations of such manifold difficulty. The only breach of the peace during the 28th occurred during the morning, at Golding's Farm,

while Smith's division was falling back to a new position made necessary by the withdrawal of Porter from the left bank of the river. The attack here made was easily thrown off by Hancock's brigade.

On the morning of the 29th, McClellan suddenly let go his hold upon Richmond, and the several divisions, abandoning their entrenchments, fell back to their first defensive position of the series the Army of the Potomac was to occupy during this critical movement. The line thus taken up crossed the Williamsburg Road, at about the point where the Confederate advance on May 31st had been stayed.

The five divisions to which had been assigned the duty of covering the retreat during the 29th were not long left in suspense. A thick mist had covered their abandonment of the entrenchments; but by eight o'clock the active Magruder had discovered that our works were no longer occupied, and he was soon in full pursuit. At nine o'clock he appeared on Sumner's front at the point where Richardson's division joined Sedgwick's, and proceeded, after his manner, to see what he could find out. The attack fell mainly upon French's brigade, which occupied the field known as "Allen's," the farm-house, the key of the position, being occupied by Brooke's Fifty-third Pennsylvania. Immediately in rear were Hazzard's four guns, soon reinforced by Pettit, with his rifles. The attack was made by Kershaw's and Griffith's brigades.

The fighting was for a time sharp. The Seventy-first Pennsylvania, the so-called "California Regiment," Lieutenant-Colonel Jones, of Sedgwick's division, was ordered up to support Brooke, which it did handsomely. After three repulses, the Confederates fell back, having lost General Griffith and many officers and men. This action, which was, as will be seen, of very limited extent,

is known by the name of Allen's Farm. It occurred between nine and eleven o'clock in the morning.¹

While Sumner was standing at bay on Allen's Field, full of fight, his position was really one of great danger. The Second Corps was supposed to connect with Smith's division; but as a matter of fact the right of the corps was swung outward, leaving a considerable interval between it and Smith's left. Into this open space in the Union line, Jackson, crossing by the engineer bridges, might be expected at any time to thrust the head of his column. Of this Sumner for a while remained unconscious, so occupied was he with the desire to get at it again with Magruder, who had assailed his front; so reluctant was he to seem to give an inch to the enemy. Franklin, who having sent away Slocum remained with his other division, finally persuaded Sumner to fall back on Savage Station, there to unite with Heintzelman and Smith.

And now occurred one of the most remarkable and painful incidents of the war. Six divisions, including those so severely handled in the great battle of Gaines' Mill, had been sent across the White Oak Swamp, to occupy positions which were certain to become of vital importance on the 30th, but against which the enemy could hardly bring any considerable force² during the day

¹ By a very singular mistake, the Comte de Paris, in his History of the Civil War, makes this action occur in the evening, whether of the 28th or of the 29th, it is difficult to understand; and assigns as the reason for its inconclusiveness, that it was begun so late in the day.

² In fact, on the 28th and 29th Huger only, with eight to ten thousand men, was on that side. With his force Huger could not have successfully attacked the troops McClellan had thrown across the swamp to protect his line of retreat; but he might have seri-

whose story we are telling. Five divisions—Sumner's two, Heintzelman's two, and one of Franklin's—had been retained as sufficient to "stand off" any force which the enemy could concentrate before dark, and thus to win the day for the undisturbed progress of the movement toward the James. But that duty was not likely to prove a light one. Lee had discovered his error respecting McClellan's plans, and the swift-footed, tireless divisions of the Army of Northern Virginia were hastening to repair the consequences of that error. And yet, in the very moment when, at about four o'clock, Magruder pushed his own and the divisions of McLaws and Jones, against the line at Savage Station, Sumner, to whom had been committed the command of the entire force, discovered, to his unspeakable amazement and indignation, that Heintzelman had, without a word of warning, marched his two divisions from the field of approaching battle and was crossing the swamp.

The possible consequences of such a desertion are sickening to contemplate. Fortunately, Jackson had been detained at the bridges. Burns, with the Seventy-Second and One Hundred and Sixth Regiments from the Philadelphia brigade, followed by Sully's First Minnesota, moved rapidly to the left to encounter the first fury of the assault. Subsequently the Fifteenth Massachusetts and the Thirty-fourth and Eighty-second New York, all of Sedgwick's division, came up to Burns' support, and, later still, the Sixty-ninth New York, of Richardson's, was sent over. General Brooks' brigade of the Sixth Corps was also marched across the rear into the woods which Heintzelman had abandoned.

ously incommoded and disconcerted the movement and have afforded Lee much valuable information. He did neither.

And now, from left to right of the line, the roar of battle becomes continuous; Kirby's, Hazzard's, Tompkins', Pettit's, Osborne's, and Bramhall's guns thunder over the heads of our troops, or fill the vacant spaces in the line. On the Confederate side the assault is made with Magruder's characteristic impetuosity, while adown the railroad a huge gun, mounted on a platform car plated with iron and named by the Confederates, "the Land Merrimac," sends its monstrous missiles hurtling into our lines. The battle, though severely contested, is at no time doubtful after the first shock of Heintzelman's defection has been recovered from. Jackson is, in mercy, still detained, and Magruder's force finds "no thoroughfare" written in letters of fire at every point of brave Sumner's line. The troops in general behave beautifully. Here and there, now and then, a regiment flutters for a moment, or is a little pushed out of line, otherwise it would scarce be a battle, but officers and men feel that they can whip all they have in front of them, and Jackson still stays back. At last, just about sunset, our troops push forward along the whole line, and "Savage Station" has been fought and won.

Of Heintzelman's defection it is impossible to speak too severely.¹ Had Jackson, as expected, come up, even only an hour before dark, instead of just after dark, the

¹ General Webb's statement of Heintzelman's explanation is that "he saw that the open space about Savage Station was so crowded with troops that there was no room for more to be usefully employed; and that as there was but one road through the swamp direct from Savage's, he judged it wise to retire by that." Let this pass for the "open space about Savage Station;" but how about the woods on the Williamsburg Road which he was to hold, and which Burns and Brooks were so unexpectedly called upon to defend, after his defection?

absence of the gallant divisions of Hooker and Kearney might have left Sumner and Franklin to be overwhelmed. But though this peril was escaped through the detention of Jackson, the loss of an advantage that might have been gained, had Heintzelman stood at his post, must always remain as a terrible charge against that officer. The facts are that Magruder, commanding the troops which through the 27th had held the entrenchments of Richmond, issued from his works on the first indication of the Union retreat and attacked the forces at Savage's with the utmost impetuosity, first, because of his own temperament; and secondly, in reliance upon the early appearance of Jackson on the Union right. Nothing doubting this, Magruder threw himself with all his weight into the fight. He was miles from his entrenchments, and most of the intervening space was perfectly familiar to the troops of Sumner and Heintzelman. They had marched over the ground; had fought over it; had for weeks camped upon it; and had, that very morning, retreated over it. Throwing himself impetuously and unreservedly into fight, as Magruder did, a crushing defeat might have been ruin, since no supports, as it proved, were within reach; his entrenchments were far away; he was in a position of no natural strength; his flanks were not protected by any obstacle, and the farther he was driven toward Richmond the farther would he have been from Jackson, who alone could bring relief and who, in fact, did not get up till dark.

It is, then, perfectly justifiable to say that, had Heintzelman with his entire corps been on the ground, not only would Magruder have been repulsed, as in fact he was, but his repulse would have found the Union lines wrapped around his flanks in a way to make it very difficult to extricate himself at all; impossible to extricate himself

without great confusion and severe loss; the plain of Savage Station might have seen Gaines' Mill avenged; the retreat to the James might have ended before it was fairly begun.

The approach of night on the 29th found Sumner victorious and happy, Magruder having been completely repulsed and driven off the ground. The old general was well content with his position, and would have been willing to stay there a week. His blood was up; and of his own motion he was little likely to take a backward step. "It required," says the Comte de Paris, "a positive order from General McClellan to determine Sumner to cross the White Oak Swamp." The order was obeyed, for Sumner was the most subordinate soul alive. Smith was sent on; then the Second Corps, and, at five o'clock on the morning of the 30th, French's brigade, the last to cross, as on the retreat from Gaines' Mill, destroyed the bridge that had been thrown over the stream which formed the channel of the so-called swamp, near Frazier's Farm.

A sad feature of the withdrawal was the abandonment at Savage Station of 2,500 Union wounded and sick, for whose transportation by rail to the White House time had not sufficed. It went dreadfully against the grain of every officer and man to leave the poor fellows to the tender mercies of the enemy, though those tender mercies had not then become so well known as later in the war. A staff of nearly five hundred surgeons, nurses, and attendants remained to relieve suffering, while, amid the vast destruction of military stores which had all day and all the previous night gone on at Savage's, an ample supply for our sick and wounded was left uninjured.

Among the killed or mortally wounded at Savage Station were Captain Charles McGonigle and Lieutenant

De Benneville B. Shewell, Seventy-second Pennsylvania; Captain J. J. Delaney, Eighty-second New York, and Lieutenant Leroy S. Hewitt, Sixty-fourth New York. General Magruder is good enough to estimate our loss at three thousand killed and wounded. It was doubtless somewhere between three and four hundred.

WHITE OAK SWAMP: GLENDALE, JUNE 30TH.

Daylight of the 30th found McClellan's army across the White Oak Swamp, while the ponderous siege train, tenderly cared for by the First Connecticut "Heavies;" the ammunition and provision trains of the army, the long and pitiful procession of the sick and wounded who could walk or crawl to a place of safety, the long and shameful procession of men, "strayed or stolen" from their regiments, with no stomach for fight, but vast stomach for fresh beef; the lowing, bellowing herd of twenty-five hundred kine—all these, under the escort and protection of Keyes' corps, followed closely by Porter, were already nearing the James at Haxall. Yet success still remains to be achieved. Two more days must pass before entire safety is attained. Meanwhile the moving column must remain exposed to assault from Jackson, following fiercely on the line of retreat, and to still more dangerous assaults from Longstreet, Magruder, Huger, and A. P. Hill, who, passing north of the White Oak Swamp, will press down upon the long flank of the Union column stretched from Frazier's Farm to Malvern Hill. To retard Jackson's pursuit, and to resist the flank attacks of the other Confederate commanders, troops must be posted and bidden to stay in their places, whatever odds shall be brought against them, since a collapse at any one point may be fatal. Forty-eight hours must

be gained for the interminable trains to find a secure cover on the James. To earn those forty-eight hours will require the sacrifice of many thousands of brave men.

To check the pursuit of Jackson down the road by which the Union army had retreated, Franklin was posted at White Oak Bridge, with Smith's division of his own corps, Naglee's brigade of Keyes' corps, Richardson's division of Sumner's corps, and, for a while, two brigades of Sedgwick's. The position was a strong one and was stoutly held. Jackson came up at eleven o'clock, with a force of infantry outnumbering Franklin and with greatly superior artillery. The jaded troops had been massed on the ground beyond the Swamp, without much regard to order or concealment, and had generally fallen asleep where they were halted, fairly numb with fatigue, when suddenly thirty pieces of Confederate artillery opened upon them from the other side. For awhile there was a scene of dire confusion; and although the loss was small, many a soldier of Smith's or Richardson's division holds that unexpected shelling at White Oak Swamp among his most memorable experiences. Soon, however, order was restored, the dangerously crowded masses were rapidly deployed, and Jackson was confronted by infantry and artillery as steady as his own. In spite of his superiority of force, even Jackson's splendid soldiership was useless against the natural obstacles which opposed the crossing. The action became largely one of artillery, and though the Confederates had nearly twenty batteries, the cool and steady firing of the Union guns, under Captain, afterward General, R. B. Ayres, kept the Confederate infantry at arm's length until night. Thus, on this, the most critical day of the seven, nearly one-half the pursuing army was neutralized by a comparatively small force, holding a commanding

position at the crossing of the great Swamp. From the first, it was too late for Jackson to retrace his steps and follow the other corps of Lee around the northern limit of White Oak Swamp, with any hope of joining in the conflict of the day, at Glendale; and thus he was held in the mortifying position of being completely blocked by a position which he could neither carry nor turn.

Meanwhile the Confederate right wing, having been thrown around the Swamp, was engaged in assailing the flank of the retreating army.

There are three points at which Lee's divisions, hurrying down from Richmond, might especially have been expected to attack McClellan. The nearest on the Union line of march was Charles City Cross Roads. Just south of this, on the Quaker Road, leading thence to Malvern, was Glendale, where a large clearing offered a field of battle unusually wide for that section of Virginia. From Glendale southward, along the Quaker Road, the flank of the Union column was more or less protected by swamps; but as the line of retreat approached the James, it again became open to attack by troops coming down the River Road. To cover the last-named point, McClellan had, on the morning of the 30th, posted the corps of Keyes and Porter, a force, as it proved, far more than sufficient for the subordinate attack which the enemy designed to make here. The Confederates, under Holmes and Wise, seemingly surprised to find the Union troops in position, were driven off by the brigade of Warren and by the fire from Porter's batteries posted on Malvern Hill.

But while thus, at one end of the long Union line, Holmes and Wise were easily repulsed by a fraction of Porter's corps, and at the other, Franklin was enabled, through the strength of his position, to prevent Jackson

from crossing the White Oak Swamp, the main action of the day was fought at Glendale, where A. P. Hill and Longstreet attacked the division of McCall, supported by Hooker and Kearney, and later by portions of Sedgwick's and Richardson's divisions. This was, in fact, one of the most severely contested actions of the campaign. The troops actually brought under fire, on the two sides, were nearly equal. McCall's division, which, after its brilliant repulse of A. P. Hill on the 26th, had lost fearfully at Gaines' Mill, bore the first onset of the enemy with fortitude, but repeated assaults finally broke the line of Seymour's brigade, which gave way in confusion, and at the same time the division of Hooker, which was on the left of Seymour, though with a considerable interval of uncovered ground, was furiously assailed. To Hooker was sent the Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania, which here won from that general high praise. In rear of the gap between Seymour and Hooker, on Nelson's Farm, had lain since morning Burns' brigade of Sedgwick's division, the other two brigades, those of Dana and Sully,¹ having been detached to support Franklin at the bridge, as already described. Just in the crisis of the fight at Glendale, however, these good troops, recalled by Sumner's orders, began to arrive upon the ground, having come much of the way from the bridge at the double quick. With impetuosity they advance into the space abandoned by Seymour. The fire here is intensely hot, and although some of the regiments, arriving in haste, and thrown individually into action, become somewhat disordered, especially as McCall's men break through their forming ranks, ground is never for an instant yielded

¹ Commanding Sedgwick's first brigade, owing to the illness of General Gorman.

to the enemy. Burns' and Dana's brigades sustain the brunt of the action, the Seventy-first and Seventy-second Pennsylvania of the former, and the Nineteenth and Twentieth Massachusetts of the latter, greatly distinguishing themselves and suffering heavy losses. Hooker's men, too, push forward, and the line is re-established. Finding our force too strong for him here, the enemy turns his efforts against the right brigade of McCall, commanded by General Meade, on whose front is the famous "regular" battery of Randol. Blow upon blow falls hard and fast, and at length, about six o'clock, Meade's men give way, and Randol's guns are taken. General Meade is severely wounded and borne from the field. An hour later, another desperate charge drives back McCall's centre and captures Cooper's battery. Kearney, meanwhile, is assailed with no less fury, but his magnificent division, inspired by its peerless leader and strongly supported by Caldwell's brigade, which has been sent down from Richardson's division at the bridge, throws off every assault.

Of Caldwell's regiments, the Sixty-first New York, under Barlow, and the Eighty-first Pennsylvania were the most severely engaged and sustained the greatest loss. Under orders from General Robinson, commanding one of Kearney's brigades, Colonel Barlow took his men in splendid style, with bayonets at a charge, through a field occupied by the enemy, where he captured a Confederate color.¹ At the farther edge of this field he was joined by the Eighty-first; and these two gallant regiments,

¹ "The Sixty-first New York Volunteers, under its most intrepid leader, Colonel Barlow, vied with the brave regiment [Sixty-third Pennsylvania, Colonel Hays] he had relieved, and charging the enemy bore off as a trophy one of his colors" (Kearney's official report).

subsequently reinforced by the Fifth New Hampshire, sustained themselves in an advanced position until night-fall. Among Kearney's men, Colonel Alexander Hays, of the Sixty-third Pennsylvania regiment, afterward a division commander of the Second Corps, here showed the stuff of which he was made, exciting admiration by his headlong courage.

Thus foiled in their attacks upon Hooker and Sedgwick, upon Kearney and Caldwell, the enemy, late in the evening, desisted from further efforts. A portion of the field wrested from McCall was, indeed, held by the Confederates, and they pulled out of the fight eight or ten captured guns; but the troops of the Second and Third Corps held their ground, with plenty of force to spare for another just such fight, while at Charles City Cross Roads, Slocum having easily beaten back the detachments that advanced against him, kept two untouched brigades ready for any emergency, having sent one brigade to Kearney in the crisis of the action. The disappointment of the Confederates at this result was extreme. Greatly exaggerating the effect of their victory at Gaines' Mill, in which they believed they defeated the bulk of our army, and imagining a scene of general demoralization and panic along the line of McClellan's retreat, they had thought to win an easy victory, and by breaking through at Glendale to turn a flight into a rout, take Franklin in rear, and destroy the Army of the Potomac as a fighting force. Except, however, by their triumph over McCall's weakened division, they had gained nothing. The divisions of Hooker, Kearney, Sedgwick, and Slocum remained intact; every blow that had been dealt had been returned swift, strong, and sure, and they were only just ready to begin fighting at dark, while the distant booming of cannon from the direction of Frazier's Farm showed

that Franklin still kept Jackson's fourteen brigades at bay. Couch, too, with his fresh division of the Fourth Corps, was drawing near the battle-field, coming up from Haxall's. Under circumstances like these, it was plainly useless to persist; and although it was doubly hard for Hill and Longstreet to give up under the very eyes of General Lee, who had brought the President of the Confederacy along with him to see the Army of the Potomac cut in two, the fighting died down and the battle was over.

"The battle of Glendale," says the Comte de Paris, "is remarkable for its fierceness among all those that have drenched the American forests with blood." The part performed by the Second Corps in this action was important and honorable, although here, as at Savage Station and previously at Fair Oaks, the corps had acquitted itself of every duty without distressing losses or the destruction of the integrity or discipline of a single regiment. At White Oak Swamp Bridge, Richardson's division with two brigades from Sedgwick's had, in the morning, constituted more than half the force with which Franklin had accomplished the vital task of keeping the impetuous Jackson, with thirty-five thousand men, quiet under the sound of the guns of his fellow-commanders of the Army of Northern Virginia; while Caldwell's brigade and the two brigades of Sedgwick just named made the march across to Glendale in season to take part in the repulse of Longstreet. General Burns in his official report bestowed high praise upon the Sixty-ninth and Seventy-first regiments of his own brigade and upon the Nineteenth Massachusetts, which had been placed under his orders. The Twentieth Massachusetts showed very high quality in the trying circumstances under which it went into action.

Among the killed of the day were Major Henry J.

How and Lieutenant David Lee, Nineteenth Massachusetts; Lieutenant George W. Kenny, Seventy-first Pennsylvania, and Lieutenant Hewitt I. Abbott, Eighty-first Pennsylvania. Among the wounded were Colonel Ebenezer W. Pierce,¹ Twenty-ninth Massachusetts, who lost an arm; Colonel Charles F. Johnson, Eighty-first Pennsylvania; Colonel E. W. Hinks, Nineteenth Massachusetts; Captain George W. Hazzard, Fourth United States Artillery; Lieutenant George W. Scott, of General Caldwell's staff, afterward the colonel of the Sixty-first New York, and Brevet Brigadier-General.

MALVERN HILL, JULY 1ST.

The night of the 30th of June fell like a pall over the hopes of the Confederate commander. McClellan had, indeed, one day more of battle; this, however, was not for life, but for a more desirable position farther down the river, where supplies could advantageously be landed. At Haxall's the Army of the Potomac was already safe. That safety had been secured by the sturdy stand of Sumner at Savage's, on the 29th; the prudent, judicious dispositions of Franklin at the bridge, on the 30th; and by the gallantry and devotion displayed at Glendale. It was now possible for McClellan to withdraw Franklin from the crossing of the White Oak Swamp, and Sumner, Heintzelman, and McCall from Glendale. The moment night fell all reason ceased for occupying so long and so ex-

¹ This is the officer who, as General Pierce (of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia), commanded at Big Bethel, under General Butler. Not content to rest under the imputations cast on his conduct of that action, he pluckily went into service a second time, as colonel of a three-years regiment.

posed a line. The last of the trains had now reached the James, at Haxall's; and morning was to see the whole army arrayed on the magnificent position of Malvern Hill.

But among the fifty thousand men who held the line from the Swamp to Nelson's Farm at dark on the 30th of June, there was one man who was in no haste to move, probably there was only one. That man was Edwin V. Sumner. Any battle-field on which he had fought was, *ipso facto*, endeared to him. The clearing at Nelson's Farm had become lovely in his eyes ever since Longstreet's troops had exchanged volleys across it with the men of the Second Corps. The fact that Glendale was, in the plans of the commander-in-chief, merely a painful and perilous necessity, a position to be held for one day, to allow the escape of the trains and artillery; that every hour of that occupation had been attended with danger, and that all occasion for its occupation had ceased at dark—all this weighed little with the fiery veteran who had fought and conquered on that ground. Like the disciple of old, he felt that it was good to be there. Nothing would have been more soothing to his sensibilities than the thought of getting up in the morning to fight Longstreet and A. P. Hill over again, with Magruder and Huger, who would then have come up, thrown into the bargain.

But General Sumner's views of the eligibility of the position of the 30th were not shared by his fellow corps commanders. So fully was it understood that those positions were merely a necessity of that day's situation, to be abandoned as soon as night should fall, in pursuance of the general plan of retreat, that, without even awaiting orders from general headquarters, Franklin, who had so stoutly held the crossing of the Swamp, began his retreat when it was fairly dark; and Heintzelman notified Sumner of

his intention to do the same. The prospect of having Jackson's four divisions upon his right flank in the morning, in addition to the force that might be found on his front, was too much even for the stubborn commander of the Second Corps, and, however regretfully, he followed Franklin and Heintzelman to Malvern Hill. But he could not avoid bearing his testimony against such irregular practices, and in his official report he says: "At 9 P.M. I received intelligence that General Franklin had retreated, and that General Heintzelman was going to do it. This, of course, compelled me to retire at once, which I would not have done without orders from the commanding general if these generals had not fallen back and entirely uncovered my right flank."

In the early morning of July 1st, the Army of the Potomac was drawn up in battle array on Malvern Hill. Porter held the left of the line, occupying the positions from which he had, the day before, repulsed the feeble attack of Holmes and Wise. His right, composed of Morell's division, rested on the James River Road. Here he connected with Couch's division, which, since June 28th, had been detached from its corps, the Fourth. On the right of Couch, whose troops were arranged in a single line with but one regiment in support, lay the corps of Heintzelman; Kearny's division first, then Hooker's. On Hooker's right lay the corps of Sumner; and on Sumner's right, the corps of Franklin. The line, several miles in length, was a huge semicircle, the two extremities resting on the river. The whole bristled with batteries, while the vast artillery reserve was placed on the broad plateau behind.

It is not necessary to repeat the oft-told story of the victorious action of Malvern Hill. The infantry attack fell upon the front of Morell's and Couch's divisions,

although the artillery of Heintzelman farther to the right, and that of the fleet from the extreme left, contributed importantly to the destruction of the enemy's columns. As the blows fell harder and faster troops from other parts of the line were brought up, until at last nine infantry brigades were actively engaged. Yet these constituted less than one-third of the Army of the Potomac. The successive assaults, the first of which took place at 3 P.M., were made by the troops of Huger, Magruder (who appeared here for the first time since the battle of Savage's Station), and D. H. Hill. At half-past four, Couch, crossing the James River Road to the front of Morell, and not finding that officer, assumed control himself, and from that time until the close of the action remained in charge of the whole infantry line.¹ His horse was shot under him as he marshalled one of Morell's regiments, which had been momentarily thrown into confusion, and he displayed everywhere the utmost coolness, readiness, courage, and resolution. The regular batteries of Kingsbury, Seeley, and Ames, and the volunteer battery of Weeden, far surpassed the ordinary achievements of artillery; they fairly smashed the artillery which the Confederates sought to bring into action; battery after battery, on that side, was driven from the field without being able to get a single shot out of one of their guns; while upon the daring infantry lines which pressed forward in

¹ "The attacks fell mainly on Porter on the left, and on Couch; and the success of the day was in a large degree due to the skill and coolness of the latter, who, holding the hottest part of the Union line, was gradually reinforced by the brigades of Caldwell, Sickles, Meagher, and several of Porter's, till he came to command the whole left centre, displaying in his conduct of the battle a high order of generalship" (Swinton, *Campaigns of the Army of the Potomac*).

the hope of carrying the crest they rained a fire which, for destructiveness, has seldom if ever been exceeded in the history of war.

The participation of the Second Corps, which, as has been said, was stationed far to the right, beyond the field of actual conflict, was through the brigades of Caldwell and Meagher of Richardson's division. Caldwell was the first to arrive. After lying in reserve under a severe fire of artillery for about an hour, his brigade was ordered into action. The Fifth New Hampshire was detached and sent to General A. P. Howe, to support a battery on the extreme right of Couch's line. The Sixty-first New York and the Eighty-first Pennsylvania, both under Colonel Barlow, were put in between Palmer's and Abercrombie's brigades, being drawn up in the open field, while the enemy occupied the edge of the woods in front. Both these regiments bore themselves with the utmost steadiness under a heavy fire, and were handled to perfection by their accomplished commander, who had already won a high reputation at Fair Oaks and Glendale. The German Seventh New York, under Colonel Van Schack, which had joined after Fair Oaks, fought on Barlow's left.

A little after night fell there was a sudden cessation in the teasing fire which the enemy still kept up, though the Sixty-first and Eighty-first had long since ceased firing; and in the lull, Barlow heard the ominous clatter which told that bayonets were being fixed on the hostile line. A moment later and there was a rapid rush out of the woods. Barlow held his men firmly in hand until the enemy were close upon him, and then opened with a volley at command, followed by an incessant firing at will, before which the enemy fled back to cover. Riding to the front of his line, Colonel Barlow found the dead and wounded of this charge close up to his line.

It was a late exigency of the battle which called the Irish brigade to the scene of conflict. About six o'clock a powerful column of the enemy advanced with extraordinary resolution upon the position held by Morell, as if determined to carry it at any cost.

General Sumner, who had, at Couch's instance, already despatched Caldwell's brigade, now, on hearing the first outburst which greeted this column, without waiting for any further request, sent the Irish brigade post haste to report to Couch. The rising storm of battle quickened the steps of the enthusiastic Irishmen, hastening to take part in the conflict. Immediately on their arrival at the West House, they were ordered to support General Griffin's guns. It was nearly dark, and the field of battle had become a scene of the most magnificent pyrotechnics. Jets of flame were darting from thousands of rifles; hissing fuses marked the flight of innumerable shells, crossing the plain from every direction, while the din of battle never for a moment ceased.

Moving across the road Meagher formed column of regiments, the Sixty-ninth in front, under the gallant Nugent, and advanced to the position of Martindale's brigade. The two rear regiments were soon detached, as will be related; but the Sixty-ninth, supported by the Eighty-eighth, under Major Quinlan, pushed forward and encountered the enemy with great spirit. Anyone who has ever been in action, knows how easy it is to recognize the firing of fresh troops; and the writer has never forgotten the outburst which announced that the Irishmen had opened upon the Confederate column, now half way up the slope. As soon as the Sixty-ninth had exhausted its ammunition, the Eighth-eighth took its place while Nugent's men replenished their boxes. When the Eighty-eighth had in turn exhausted its sixty

rounds, the Sixty-ninth was again moved to the front. Scarcely had it relieved its comrade, when Nugent discovered that a daring body of the enemy had mounted the hill and was bearing down upon his flank. Changing front with his left companies, and sending back orders which brought Quinlan with the Eighty-eighth up on the left of the Sixty-ninth, Nugent charged with both regiments, and met the enemy in a hand to hand encounter, which speedily resulted in the complete overthrow of the attacking force, and the capture of Lieutenant-Colonel Waggaman, commanding the Tenth Louisiana.

While the Sixty-ninth and Eighty-eighth were thus engaged, the remaining regiments of the brigade had been sent to other parts of the field. The Twenty-ninth Massachusetts, Lieutenant-Colonel Barnes, had been at first held in reserve, but was later sent to support Robertson's battery of horse artillery, which the terrific outburst of the early evening had caused Porter to bring forward in person with the greatest haste. Upon representations made by an officer of General McClellan's staff, the Sixty-third New York was ordered by General Meagher to accompany that officer to act as support to a battery which was going into action on still another part of the line.

Night fell upon the field of battle, cumbered with the corpses of the slain and the writhing bodies of the wounded. Over an extended front the ground between the Union line and the woods had been trampled in repeated charges by the troops of Huger, Hill, and Magruder; and everywhere prostrate horses and prostrate men bore witness to the gallantry which had carried these divisions of the Army of Northern Virginia across the plain and up the fatal slopes of Malvern Hill.

Night fell, indeed, but not in quiet. The cannon still boomed at intervals. The shrieking shells could be tracked through the darkness by their burning fuses as they crossed the field in angry retaliation, and as they burst lit up some little space with a lurid and baleful glare. Now and then the rattle of small arms broke forth, as the uneasy lines of skirmishers pressed too closely on each other, and, for a moment, aroused the expectation of a night attack.

Night fell upon the last hope of Davis and Lee, and of their lately jubilant people and army, to crush and destroy the Union forces. Until Glendale, hardly a doubt had entered the Confederate mind that this, and not less than this, must be the outcome of the matchless valor of their soldiers and the daring strategy of their commanders. The close of day on July 1st found McClellan's army intact, not a brigade captured or destroyed; its base safely shifted from the York to the James; the navy at its back; its line of battle stern and defiant; its last assailants beaten back to cover; the ground in its front strewn with the killed or wounded of one of the bloodiest battles of the war, in which not one inch of space had, for one moment of time, been yielded to the most furious assault.

Among the killed of the Second Corps at Malvern Hill were Lieutenant-Colonel Eli T. Conner, Eighty-first Pennsylvania; Major Charles L. Brown, Thirty-fourth New York; Lieutenant Stephen Lange, Seventh New York; Lieutenant Thomas Reynolds, Sixty-ninth New York; Captain Joseph O'Donoghue and Lieutenant Francis J. Hackett, Eighty-eighth New York.

Among the wounded were Colonel E. C. Charles, Forty-second New York; Colonel John Burke, Sixty-third New York; Lieutenant Thomas L. Livermore, Fifth New Hampshire, afterward the corps Chief of Ambulances.

The losses of the Army of the Potomac during the "Seven Days" had been 1,734 killed; 8,062 wounded; 6,053 missing; in all, 15,849. The losses of the Second Corps had been 201 killed; 1,195 wounded; 1,024 missing; in all, 2,420. The Third Corps had lost 1,973; the Fourth, 800; the Sixth, 2,878.

Of all the corps, Porter's had suffered most. This corps, taken with McCall's division and the reserve artillery attached thereto, had had to bear one-half the entire loss. This was the only portion of the army which had been in any sense shattered.

CHAPTER IV.

ANTIETAM.

ALTHOUGH the battle of Malvern Hill was in all respects a victory, the enemy being repulsed at every point with great slaughter, without gaining so much as a single trophy, or occupying any part of the Union position for the briefest space of time, the Army of the Potomac that night retreated to Harrison's Landing, on the James, as a position better suited for the delivery of supplies and stores. Here it remained, resting and refitting, until about August 7th, when the withdrawal of the active force from the Peninsula may be said to have begun. During the long stay at Harrison's Landing, the Fifty-ninth New York, Colonel William L. Tidball, was assigned to the Second Brigade, Second Division. On the 2d of July a still more important reinforcement was received, when General Nathan Kimball joined, with three regiments, all destined to win high distinction in their service with the Second Corps: the Eighth Ohio, Colonel S. S. Carroll (Lieutenant-Colonel Sawyer, present commanding); the Fourteenth Indiana, Colonel William Harrow; the Seventh Virginia, Colonel James Evans. These troops had served under McClellan in West Virginia, and under Shields in "The Valley;" they were already veterans, inured to marching and undaunted in battle. At first General Kimball's command formed an independent brigade, becoming later the nucleus of the Third Division of the corps. Among other changes

in organization at Harrison's Landing occurred the reduction of the Seventy-first Pennsylvania Volunteers from a fifteen-company to a ten-company regiment, the supernumerary officers being mustered out. The several reinforcements received raised the aggregate, present and absent, in the face of numerous desertions and discharges for disability, from 21,707, as by the corps return of June 30th, to 24,834, on the 31st of July. Out of this number the "present for duty" aggregated 16,013.

On the 4th of July Brigadier-Generals Sumner (U. S. A.), Richardson, and Sedgwick (U. S. Vols.) were promoted to be Major-Generals of Volunteers. Captain A. W. Putnam became the Quartermaster at Corps Headquarters; Surgeon J. A. Liddell, Medical Director. Lieutenant J. C. Audenreid succeeded Lieutenant Cushing as aide-de-camp. The latter took command of the artillery of the First Division.

During the month of July the following changes took place among the field-officers of the corps.

Colonel Ira R. Grosvenor, Seventh Michigan, resigned July 8th. Colonel Thomas J. Parker, Sixty-fourth New York, was honorably discharged July 12th. Colonel William Harrow, Fourteenth Indiana, resigned July 30th, but was recommissioned colonel August 4th. Major William W. Cook, Fifth New Hampshire, resigned July 17th, in consequence of his Fair Oaks wounds. Major Robert A. Parrish, Jr., Seventy-first Pennsylvania, was honorably discharged July 16th. One officer was dismissed the service: Major James M. De Witt, Seventy-second Pennsylvania.

The five weeks passed at Harrison's Landing were altogether uneventful, except for the shelling of our lines by the enemy's artillery, from the opposite side of the James River, at midnight of July 31st, and for the movement

of General Hooker to Malvern Hill between the 3d and 7th of August. Hooker was supported by Sedgwick's division of the Second Corps, and, at a later period, by Couch's of the Fourth Corps. The movement was successful; but peremptory orders from Washington, for the evacuation of the Peninsula, compelled General McClellan to withdraw the troops engaged in this expedition, and, after such delay as was necessarily involved in the movement of the sick, the trains, and the artillery, to retreat with his whole force down the Peninsula, up which the army had marched full of hope and courage three months before. Some of the divisions embarked at Yorktown; others, at Fort Monroe; others still, at Newport News. The Second Corps, after several days' delay from lack of transports, took shipping at the latter point, and arrived at Acquia Creek on the 26th of August, it being designed to despatch the corps thence to the line of the Rappahannock, in order to support General Pope on his left. It was, however, not the destiny of the Second Corps to enter actively into the campaign known as the "Second Bull Run." This was certainly not the fault of the corps or its commander. No body of troops could have been in finer form; no leader more ready to resist or attack as duty should call.

The corps, which had, on the 26th, reached Acquia Creek with a view to marching across to support Pope's left flank on the Rappahannock, was, on the 27th, ordered to Alexandria, upon the news that Pope had been outflanked by his right and his communications broken, involving his precipitate retreat upon Manassas. The 27th and 28th were days almost of panic at Washington, Halleck himself knowing little or nothing of Pope's position and plans. On the 28th Halleck instructed McClellan to place Sumner's corps, as it should arrive, near

the guns and particularly at Chain Bridge. Had Sumner's corps with Franklin's, which had been even longer on the ground, been promptly marched out toward Manassas, artillery or no artillery, the result of the action of August 30th must have been widely different. It is, of course, better to send a corps with its artillery than without it ; but it was not for want of cannon that the action of the 30th was lost, but for want of a sufficient number of steady, enduring infantry.

That Franklin was not up on the 30th has been made the subject of complaint, now against Franklin himself, now against McClellan, now against Halleck. Mr. Ropes, in his admirable history of "The Army under Pope," seems to have shown conclusively that the responsibility rests upon the last-named. The same apprehensions regarding Washington, which had, in May, induced him to withhold McDowell's thirty-five thousand men who were intended to form McClellan's right, in August kept him uncertain, inconstant, incoherent, for the space of two days, holding in front of the capital the two full corps of Franklin and Sumner, the considerable commands of Cox and Tyler, with Couch's division rapidly coming up the river. But wherever the responsibility for the non-despatch of Franklin's corps, by the evening of the 28th or the morning of the 29th, may rest, no one ever intimated that the delay in forwarding Sumner's corps was due, in any sense or in any degree, to its commander. No one doubted that the old soldier would have marched on the moment, even though he had had to trudge on foot at the head of his troops. That both Franklin and Sumner might have participated in the battle of Chantilly, on the 1st of September, is not to be questioned, for both these commands were then up within striking distance. Moreover, Couch, the last to leave the Penin-

sula, had collected at Alexandria one-half of his fine, fresh, large division, and had marched out to German-town, though without a single piece of artillery of his own. These reinforcements gave Pope not less than twenty-five thousand troops who had not fired a shot since July 1st. Here, as Mr. Ropes has pointed out, was the opportunity for closing the campaign with a victory as brilliant as that which terminated the retreat to the James. A new Malvern Hill might have been fought at Chantilly. Jackson had undertaken one of his wild incursions into Pope's rear; Longstreet was far behind, and could not come up until long after nightfall; Kearney and Reno's divisions actually sufficed to hold Jackson at bay; Hooker's division, the two divisions of Sumner, the two divisions of Franklin, and two brigades of Couch were all available to be thrown upon Jackson's right and left. "Such an attack," says Mr. Ropes, "would have been simply fatal to Jackson. He had absolutely no retreat."

But it was not to be so. The campaign was destined to end in humiliation. The braggart who had begun his campaign with insolent reflections, in General Orders, upon the Army of the Potomac and its commander, and with silly bluster about his policy being attack and not defence, about discarding "such ideas" as lines of retreat and bases of supply, about looking before and not behind, about studying the possible lines of retreat of his enemy and leaving his own to take care of themselves, had been kicked, cuffed, hustled about, knocked down, run over, and trodden upon as rarely happens in the history of war. His communications had been cut; his headquarters pillaged; a corps had marched into his rear, and had encamped at its ease upon the railroad by which he received his supplies; he had been beaten or

foiled in every attempt he had made to "bag" those defiant intruders; and, in the end, he was glad to find a refuge in the intrenchments of Washington, whence he had sallied forth, six weeks before, breathing out threatenings and slaughter.

In the withdrawal after Chantilly, Sumner, with the Second Corps, covered the retreat on the Vienna and Langley road.¹ On arriving at the Potomac, Sumner at first took post on the Virginia side; but on the next day, the 3d, was ordered to Tenallytown, Md., just outside the District of Columbia.

During the month of August Colonel James Evans, Seventh Virginia, resigned, being succeeded in the command of that regiment by Colonel Joseph Snyder, an officer new to the command. The following officers were honorably discharged: Lieutenant-Colonel James J. Mooney and Major Peter Bowe, Forty-second New York; Major Edward Z. Lawrence, Sixty-first New York; Captain W. O. Bartlett, First Rhode Island Artillery. Another change which took place during this month deserves especial notice. To fill the vacancy caused by the death at Fair Oaks of Lieutenant-Colonel Massett, of the Sixty-first New York, the Governor of that State selected Lieutenant Nelson A. Miles, Twenty-second Massachusetts, on account of his eminent services on the Peninsula. On every successive field of battle the merits of this remarkable young officer had shone with increasing splendor.

On the 5th of September, Lee's intention of crossing the Potomac having become clearly manifest, the Second Corps, with Williams' Twelfth Corps, both under command of Sumner, forming the centre of the army in its new dispositions, marched to Rockville. It was not yet

¹ Lt. Ch. Zierenberg, First Minnesota, was mortally wounded.

certain whether the enemy's plan was to move down the Potomac and attack Washington from the north, to move upon Baltimore, or to invade Pennsylvania. The progress of affairs made it increasingly probable that the last was Lee's real purpose, and the Second Corps was successively advanced to Middleburg, September 9th, to Clarksburg, September 10th, to Urbana, September 12th, and on the 13th to Frederick City, which had been occupied by our forces the day before, after a brisk skirmish in the very streets of the city.

Probably no soldier who entered Frederick on the morning of the 13th will ever forget the cordial welcome with which the rescuing army was received by the loyal inhabitants. For five months the Second Corps had been upon the soil of Virginia, where every native white face was wrinkled with spite as the "invaders" passed; marching through or encamping in a region which, to a Northern eye, was inconceivably desolate and forlorn, barren fields affording the only relief to the dreary continuity of tangled thickets and swampy bottoms. Here, in the rich valley of the Monocacy, shut in by low mountains of surpassing grace of outline, all nature was in bloom; the signs of comfort and opulence met the eye on every side; while, as the full brigades of Sumner, in perfect order and with all the pomp of war, with glittering staffs and proud commanders, old Sumner at the head, pressed through the quaint and beautiful town, the streets resounded with applause, and from balcony and window fair faces smiled, and handkerchiefs and scarfs waved to greet the army of the Union. Whether the ancient and apocryphal Barbara Fritchie had sufficiently recovered from the sentimental shock of a poetical shower of imaginary musket-balls to appear again on this occasion may be doubted; but many an

honest and many a fair countenance of patriot man and patriot woman looked out upon the brave array of Sumner's corps with smiles and tears of gratitude and joy. Amid all that was desolate and gloomy, amid all that was harsh and terrible, in the service these soldiers of the Union were called to render, that bright day of September 13, 1862, that gracious scene of natural beauty and waving crops, that quaint and charming Southern city, that friendly greeting, form a picture which can never pass out of the memory of any whose fortune it was to enter Frederick town that day.

The night of the 13th, the mass of the Army of the Potomac rested near Frederick, with Franklin at Buckeyston, Couch at Licksville, and Reno far in advance upon the right at Middletown, feeling the enemy. Meanwhile, to the left and front, at Harper's Ferry, twelve thousand Union troops, under Colonel Dixon S. Miles, lay in peril, environed and beset by six Confederate divisions. On the 14th, and through the 14th, and even until 8 o'clock on the morning of the 15th, Miles still held out. That the passes of the South Mountain were not carried on the 13th, or early on the 14th, and thus a force poured into the Pleasant Valley to take in the rear McLaws and Anderson, who were assailing Miles from the north, has been made the subject of grave impeachment against McClellan. Passing below the commander-in-chief, the blame has, by some, been laid on the shoulders of Franklin, who commanded the left column, which was directed against Crampton's Pass, the nearest point at which the South Mountain could be crossed for the relief of Miles. Franklin, indeed, carried the pass in the most brilliant manner on the afternoon of the 14th, and by night had debouched into Pleasant Valley. But on the morning of the 15th, although Franklin was only two leagues

away, Miles, at eight o'clock, surrendered his command, thus not only yielding twelve thousand prisoners to the enemy, but opening the way for McLaws and Anderson to slip out through Harper's Ferry, or for Walker to pass through that point to their support.

While Franklin was thus engaged at Crampton's Pass, on the afternoon of the 14th of September, Hooker's First and Reno's Ninth Corps, both under Burnside, forced the passage of Turner's Gap, six miles to the north, against Longstreet, after an action of extreme severity, in which Reno, the most promising officer of the Potomac Army, lost his life.

Sumner's corps was in support of the columns attacking at Turner's Gap, but was not engaged, passing to the front only at nightfall to relieve Reno's corps, which had suffered severely in its victorious engagement of the afternoon.

On the morning of the 15th the four corps of the right and centre, with Sykes' division of the Fifth Corps, passed through the defile, and were directed upon the Antietam River, behind which, around the village of Sharpsburg, Lee had established himself to await the threatened attack of McClellan, the promised reinforcement of Jackson. Franklin with his own (Sixth) corps and Couch's division of the Fourth were held well out on the left to watch McLaws and Anderson. Meanwhile Jackson's troops were rapidly moving up the right bank of the Potomac, to cross at Shepherdstown and reinforce Lee behind the Antietam; to be followed, a little later, by the divisions of McLaws and Anderson, which, slipping away from in front of Franklin, who had at no time got close enough to the force in Pleasant Valley for serious skirmishing, set out on that long march to join Lee which a proper degree of activity on the part of the Union commander would have rendered useless.

In his history of the Antietam and Fredericksburg campaigns, General Palfrey has given a strong but just expression to the considerations which imperatively required that General McClellan, crossing the South Mountain at Turner's, on the morning of the 15th of September, should have pushed straight and hard against that portion of the Confederate army which was under the immediate direction of the commander-in-chief. By the light of Lee's despatch, so fortunately picked up in Frederick, McClellan knew the position of every division of the hostile army. He was aware that the capture of Harper's Ferry had withdrawn not less than six divisions,¹ not one of which could, by the most strenuous exertions, be brought up, through the long, roundabout way which alone was open to them, to support Lee on the Antietam before the morning of the 16th, while a portion could not be expected before the 17th. In this situation the most strenuous exertions should have been made to carry the four corps and the detached division (Sykes'), constituting the right and centre, clean and fast across the space, not more than seven miles as the line of march was, which intervened between the base of the South Mountain and the banks of the Antietam. The staff should have been out upon the road all day, full of life and all alert to prevent delays, to keep the columns moving, to crowd the troops forward, and to bend everything to the encounter. But it was not to be so. The army moved uncertainly and slowly for lack of the inspiration and direction which general headquarters should always supply, so that only Richardson's and Sykes' divisions, with the cavalry, came in actual contact with the enemy during the day. These divisions, finding the enemy in position

¹ Jackson's three ; and those of Walker, McLaws, and Anderson.

behind the Antietam, halted and deployed, Richardson on the right (north) of the road from Keedysville to Sharpsburg, Sykes on the left (south) of the road. The other divisions of the right and centre came up during the evening or night, most of them being simply massed as they arrived.

If it be admitted to have been impracticable to throw the thirty-five brigades that had crossed the South Mountain at Turner's across the Antietam during the 15th in season and in condition to undertake the attack upon Lee's fourteen brigades that day with success, it is difficult to see what excuse can be offered for the failure to fight the impending battle on the 16th, and that early. It is true that Lee's force had then been increased by the arrival of Jackson, with Starke's and Lawton's divisions, but those of Anderson, McLaws, Walker, and A. P. Hill could not be brought up that day. A peremptory recall of Franklin, in the early evening of the 15th, would have placed his three divisions in any part of the line that might be desired. Even without Franklin, the advantage of concentration would have been on the side of McClellan. When both armies were assembled the Union forces were at least nine to six; of the Confederate six, only four could possibly have been present on the 16th. Without Franklin, the odds would still have been seven to four.

The eve of Antietam witnessed important changes in the structure of the Second Corps. General Kimball's regiments had, since their arrival at Harrison's Landing, July 2d, been treated as forming an independent brigade. This, on the march to Antietam, had been reinforced by a nine months' regiment, the One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania, Colonel R. A. Oakford. On the afternoon of September 16th the brigade of

General Max Weber, comprising the First Delaware, Colonel John W. Andrews; Fourth New York, Colonel J. D. McGregor; and the Fifth Maryland, Major Blumenberg, was assigned to the corps. These troops, together with three new regiments—the Fourteenth Connecticut, Colonel Dwight Morris; One Hundred and Eighth New York, Colonel O. H. Palmer; and the One Hundred and Thirtieth Pennsylvania, Colonel H. I. Zinn—forming a brigade under command of Colonel Morris, were constituted a division, to be known as the Third, under the command of General William H. French, formerly the commander of the First Brigade of the First Division.

So far as the army was concerned, the work of the 16th was very trivial. Of the thirteen divisions that came up, only Hooker's corps, crossing the Antietam by the upper fords, became engaged, and that but partially. Most of the divisions did not even assume positions with reference to the fighting of the next day. It was to require forty-eight hours to carry the Army of the Potomac seven miles and get them into fight. Contrast this with the way in which the same corps were brought into action at Gettysburg, ten months later, or with the manner in which the Western troops were marched from Fort Henry to Fort Donelson and thrown against the latter position! The Comte de Paris assumes that the fault was in the demoralization of McClellan's army. "Two weeks only had elapsed," he says, "since he had taken command of this army, or rather this disorganized mob. He had not been able to transform it sufficiently to secure that regularity and perseverance in the march which, even more than steadiness under fire, constitutes the superiority of old troops." This criticism is altogether erroneous. The Potomac

army, excepting possibly the First and Twelfth Corps, which had had particularly hard fortune in the campaign under Pope, was in better condition on the 15th of September, 1862, than on the 30th of June, 1863, after it had passed through the most disastrous and depressing defeats of Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, in which it lost thirty thousand men, largely the veterans of the Peninsula, with an excessive proportion of tried and useful officers. The superiority of 1863 over 1862 was in the spirit that animated general headquarters, and in the organization of the staff.

At last, on the morning of the 17th, the battle was begun. Hooker's corps, which had crossed by the upper bridge and fords, whither it had during the night been followed by the Twelfth Corps, late commanded by Williams, now by Mansfield, attacked the Confederate left with headlong impetuosity. The action was furious, the losses monstrous. So intent was Hooker upon pushing his attack with the First Corps, that the Twelfth Corps was not called up until his own troops had been badly broken up. The advance of Mansfield's two divisions, under Williams and Greene, was gallantly made, but the attacking force was finally brought to a stand by fresh Confederate troops arriving from the centre.

The battle had begun at daylight. By nine o'clock that battle, so far as the First and Twelfth Corps were concerned, was practically over; the veteran Mansfield had been killed; Hooker had been carried disabled from the field; Hartsuff and Crawford had also been wounded. The First and Twelfth Corps had even lost some of the ground they had gained at so terrible a cost. On either side, the combatants who had thus far been engaged seemed indisposed to renew the struggle, and contented themselves with reforming their shattered lines as far as

possible, waiting, exhausted, for the arrival—it could hardly be said of reinforcements, but rather of troops which should begin a new, another battle. From the left bank of the Antietam a powerful column was approaching the field, consisting of the divisions of Sedgwick and French. It seems scarcely possible to question that, had Sumner's corps, which was about equal in numbers to the First and the Twelfth Corps combined, been massed during the previous night behind Hooker, and moved forward with him and Mansfield to the assault at six o'clock, the Confederate left would have been crushed by the onset. But thus far the efforts of our troops had been made in succession, and not in conjunction. Hooker had been fought out before Mansfield had been called in; Mansfield's small corps had been fearfully handled, and though gallantly holding on to the ground gained, had been brought to a stand an hour before Sumner's advance reached the field. Yet, even though the Second Corps had been brought up so late,¹ there was yet opportunity for a decisive victory. These fresh troops, throbbing with the spirit of action, doubtless equalled all that Lee, his right threatened by Burnside, could bring to oppose them, after the terrific losses of the early morning. Moreover, Slocum's division of Franklin's corps was hastening toward the same point, and would soon be up and ready to engage the enemy.

But the lack of concert which has baffled the efforts of the Union army thus far is still to make the exertions

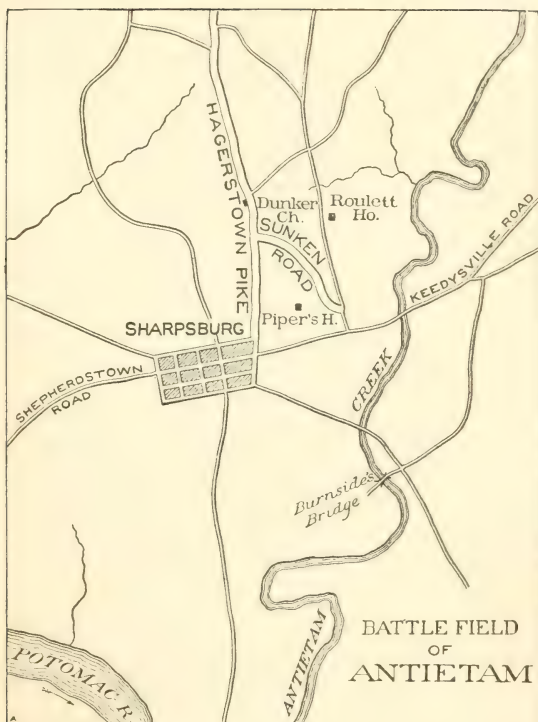
¹ Sumner received the order to cross the Antietam and to move to Hooker's support at 7.20 A.M. His head of column came on the ground at nine o'clock. The movement had been rapid and even hurried. The statement has more than once been publicly made that Sumner received the order to cross the evening before. There is not a word of truth in it.

and sacrifices of these brave divisions fruitless. Two battles have already been fought. Sumner is to fight, not a third, but three; Sedgwick, French, and Richardson are to be hurled separately against a vigilant and tireless enemy, who masses his brigades now to receive one assault and now another. On being ordered forward at 7.20 A.M., Sumner took with him but two of his divisions. Richardson, who was to have been relieved in the position he occupied by Morell, of the Fifth Corps, had been delayed three quarters of an hour, when Sumner, crossing the Antietam, directed Sedgwick's division toward the nearest point of the enemy's line. So proud was he of his gallant troops, so full of fight, so occupied with the thought of engaging the enemy, that he did not even see to it that French, who followed Sedgwick, was brought up within supporting distance—but allowed him, for want of precise direction, to diverge widely to the left. Moving rapidly forward, Sedgwick's division, in a column of three deployed lines,¹ entered the first belt of woods, out of which the First and Twelfth Corps had, at such a fearful cost, driven the enemy. The ground beneath those great, fair Maryland oaks was strewn with the killed and the wounded of the earlier battle. Gorman's brigade was in front; Dana's next; while the rear

¹ The order of the regiments in the three brigades was as follows, from left to right. Gorman's brigade: Thirty-fourth New York (Suiter), Fifteenth Massachusetts (Kimball), Eighty-second New York (Hudson), First Minnesota (Sully). Dana's brigade: Twentieth Massachusetts (Palfrey), Fifty-ninth New York (Tidball), Seventh Michigan (Hall), Forty-second New York (Bomford), Nineteenth Massachusetts (Hinks). Howard's brigade: Seventy-second Pennsylvania (Baxter); Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania (Owen), One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania (Morehead), Seventy-first Pennsylvania (Wistar).

line was formed by the Philadelphia brigade, to-day commanded by Howard, returned, with an empty sleeve, from his Fair Oaks wound.

It was a beautiful sight, those three lines of battle, as they emerged from the first belt of woods, passed through the corn-field, ripe almost to the harvest—and, moving steadily westward, crossed the Hagerstown pike. But, surely, they are not going to attack the enemy in that order! Other dispositions doubtless are to be made. The three lines are scarce seventy yards from front to rear. Two hundred men moving by the flank, in single file, would extend from the head of the column to its rear. Should these troops advance in this order, all three lines will be almost equally under fire at once, and their losses must be enormously increased. And where are the brigades that are to support them on the right and left, and protect the flanks of this perilously dense column? French is out of reach. The shattered brigades of the Twelfth Corps are holding stiffly on to their ground, under cover, but are hardly in numbers or in condition to undertake the offensive; and certainly, without a distinct effort to bring them forward, they will not be on hand if Sumner's column, in its forward rush, shall be assailed in flank. Richardson, indeed, could be up in forty minutes; and half that time would serve to draw French in toward Sedgwick's left. But Sumner does not wait. He feels as strong in those five thousand men as if they were fifty thousand. All his life in the cavalry, he has the instincts of a cavalry commander. What shall stay him? He cannot imagine anything stopping those three splendid brigades. He will crush the Confederate left with one terrific blow, then he will swing his column around with a grand, bold half-wheel to the left, and sweep down the Confederate line, driving the enemy before him, through



the village of Sharpsburg, and heap them up in disorder before Burnside, who, crossing the lower bridge, will complete the victory.

The order is still forward. Leaving the "Dunker Church" on their left and rear, Sedgwick's division, in close array, in three lines by brigade, having crossed the Hagerstown pike, disappears in the woods. This is no tangled thicket like the Wilderness, where a captain may not see the left of his company, but a noble grove of perfect trees, free from underbrush, allowing the rapid advance of the lines in unbroken order. Even when the leading brigade emerges from the further side of the grove, no enemy is seen in front. Only Stuart's horse-batteries, from some high, rocky ground on the right, search the woods, as they had the corn-field, with shell and solid shot. What means this unopposed progress? Is it well or ill, that this ground should not be disputed? Does it signify success or danger? It means that the Confederates have refused their left, and that Sedgwick is now pressing, in column, with his flank absolutely unprotected, past the real front of the enemy, and is aiming at that portion of their line which is drawn back. It is a position at once of power and of danger. If he will let Gorman go straight on until he strikes something, but hold Dana until the ground is cleared in front for a left half-wheel, to bring him facing south, and at the same time throw Howard's brigade into column of regiments, to be moved readily west to support Gorman or south to support Dana, the Second Division will have at least a chance—a small chance to achieve a victory against the superior forces which Lee is gathering to assail it, but a large chance to make a strong resistance, to give a blow for every blow it must take, and, at the worst, to fall back without disaster.



MAJ.-GEN. JOHN SEDGWICK
Commanding Second Division Second Army Corps
MARCH 13 TO SEPTEMBER 17, 1862

But neither the chance of victory nor the chance of safety is to be taken. Without fronting so much as a regiment south, without increasing the intervals between the crowded brigades, two of which almost touch each other on the dangerously exposed left, Sumner, riding with the field-officers of the leading brigade, drives his column straight westward to find the enemy. And soon he finds him. As the leading brigade emerges from the grove last mentioned, fire is opened upon it from a line¹ extended along the crest of a slight ridge in front, upon which stand a farmhouse, barn, and stacks of corn, while from the left and rear of this line one of Stuart's batteries plays upon Gorman's front. Our men drop like autumn leaves, but the regiments stand up to their work without a quiver; the colors are advanced and the battle begun with good set purpose. How strong was the force here encountered it is not possible now to ascertain with confidence, and it is useless to conjecture what might have been the issue of the conflict thus joined, since the fate of Sedgwick's division that day was not to be determined by the comparative numbers or valor of the troops that faced east and west. Straight upon the flanks of the column was advancing an overwhelming Confederate force.

These troops comprised the division of McLaws, the remains of those divisions which had in the earlier morning contested the advance of Hooker and Mansfield, and other brigades rapidly drawn in from the Confederate centre. As these reinforcements hurried along the rear of their main line, their march brought them directly upon the flank and even into the rear of Sedgwick.

¹ If one can make out anything from the Confederate reports of Antietam, this was the brigade of Early.

At the moment the storm is breaking Sumner is riding along the rear of the leading brigade, enjoying the furious fire of musketry, and encouraging Gorman's regiments to a fresh advance. As he pauses a moment to converse with Colonel Kimball, of the Fifteenth Massachusetts, Major Philbrick calls attention to a large force of the enemy advancing from the left upon the flank of the division, driving before them some of Hooker's men who had still held to their ground in the woods around the Dunker Church. "My God!" exclaims Sumner, "we must get out of this;" and he dashes back to form Dana's and Howard's brigades to meet this sudden and most appalling danger. But there is not time. A line of battle struck that way is the weakest thing in the world. Each of Sedgwick's brigades comprised fifteen hundred men, but at its extreme left flank each had the strength of two men. Had even a single regiment been deployed along the flank of the attacking column, with skirmishers advanced to give warning of the enemy's approach, dispositions might have been made to avert the disaster, though the three brigade lines would still have been found dangerously close, not only vastly increasing the loss by direct fire from the front, but rendering it difficult to effect new formations looking south.

The enemy dash upon the flank of the Philadelphia brigade, which is the third line, and swinging viciously around, gain its rear. In vain does Howard, who, though somewhat lacking in those personal qualities which inspire troops and lift regimental commanders off the ground in the crisis of a fight, yields to no man in individual bravery, strive to get his brigade into position to protect the rear of the column. His left regiment, the Seventy-second Pennsylvania, is crushed by the first fearful blow dealt it, and is driven out in disorder. Sumner has given

the word to retreat, and the other regiments, moving rapidly toward their right, away from the increasing fire, slip out of the deadly grasp which is fastening upon their rear. Gorman is still fighting in front. Dana's brigade has become the rear line. Its crumbling left is hurriedly thrown back, as best can be, to meet the attack from that quarter, while its right regiments, facing about, open their first fire to the rear. The slaughter is terrible. The enemy have, by Sumner's ill-regulated ardor in pushing so far westward, secured an enormous advantage, and they know it and press it to the utmost. They have even brought more troops to the field than they can use against our bewildered and broken column.

But a few minutes, a brief quarter of an hour, have elapsed since the appearance of the enemy upon our flank, yet it has become evident that there is but one thing to do, and that is to "get out of this," in order or disorder, by the shortest path toward the north which still remains open, though the victorious foe is already marching a strong column northward, through the open fields on the west of the Hagerstown pike, to still further surround our entrapped brigades. Yet it is not the way of the regiments which up to this moment have held their ground, under conditions so appalling, against a force so overwhelming, to retreat in disorder. Although in twenty minutes as many hundreds of men have fallen, not a color is left to become a trophy of that bloody fight; although in some regiments the color-bearers and every man of the color-guard have fallen,¹ other hands lift the flags from the ground and wave them defiantly

¹ Color-Sergeant Charles Burton, Thirty-fourth New York, who had carried the flag of the regiment through all the Peninsula battles, was here five times wounded.

aloft. The Fifteenth Massachusetts, which has had one man in every eight killed, even brings out a Confederate color, wrested from its bearer in a hand-to-hand encounter. Although the fatal field is now swept by crossing fires, some of the regiments march off in perfect order, nor do they go far. Despite their horrible losses and the necessity of a rapid retreat, they only move just far enough to get out of the trap in which the division has been caught and mangled. Scarcely one hundred yards from the point where the right of the First Minnesota, of Gorman's brigade, had rested, that regiment, with its comrade, the Eighty-second New York, and a regiment of Dana's, the Nineteenth Massachusetts, of which Colonel Sully, finding its colonel, the gallant Hinks, severely wounded, has taken command, face about, in line nearly perpendicular to the Hagerstown pike, and open a sharp fire upon the advancing enemy. Other regiments are halted and reformed, two or three hundred yards farther to the north, and upon these Sully's little command falls back, under orders. Kirby's battery, under command of Lieutenant Woodruff, is placed in position by General Sedgwick himself, who, though temporarily overborne by Sumner's impetuosity in hurrying the division into action, with such lamentable consequences, sprang to the fore the moment disaster threatened the division, and, though wounded once, twice, and still again, remains at the front rallying his regiments and making the dispositions imperatively required in the event of the advance of the victorious enemy. Woodruff's guns open as fast and furiously as they did at Fair Oaks, while Captain Tompkins' Rhode Island Battery (A), which has been already engaged with heavy loss, comes into action to meet the new peril.

Will the enemy take the initiative? Sumner fears it.

He orders Williams to send forward such of the troops of the Twelfth Corps as are in hand. Stout Gordon, who had been a lieutenant of Sumner's regiment in Mexico, advances his brigade, already shattered by the terrible fighting of the morning, but in vain; the enemy are too strong, and, after sustaining heavy losses, the brave men of the Twelfth Corps are compelled to fall back. The Union artillery on the right and on the centre breaks into a furious cannonade, to cover the discomfiture of our infantry. But the enemy have no purpose to undertake an aggressive movement, for they discern the approach of reinforcements to the Union lines. Smith's division of the Sixth Corps has been ordered up to support Sedgwick, while to the left a powerful column, consisting of French's division of the Second, is closing in to try its fortune in a new attack.

French's division, the third, had, as narrated, been formed during the march from Washington to the Antietam. It comprised (1) the brigade commanded by General Max Weber; (2) the bouyant, dashing, indomitable brigade of Western troops, under the command of General Nathan Kimball, here reinforced by a fresh regiment, the One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania; and (3) a brigade of new troops, commanded by Colonel Dwight Morris. This division, as has been stated, crossed the Antietam in rear of Sedgwick, and was then directed toward the left, too far as it proved. With French close on Sedgwick's left, the disaster that had just taken place would surely have been averted, if, indeed, the united onset of these two powerful divisions had not proved irresistible. But it was to be a day of isolated attacks and wasted efforts. Just as Hooker was already beaten before Mansfield was brought up; just as Mansfield and Hooker alike had been beaten before Sumner went in; so, again,

Sedgwick had been almost annihilated before French was in order to attack; and the troops that had just driven back the brigades of Gorman, Dana, and Howard were left free to encounter the onset of Weber, Kimball, and Morris.

At the distance of about half a mile from the Dunker Church stood on that day the house and farm-buildings of Roulett, or Rullet, against which French's attack was directed. Weber's brigade, in advance, drove the enemy's skirmishers before them, until the Confederate infantry was found in force at this group of buildings. From these they were soon dislodged, though not without hard fighting; and were pushed back to a sunken road which ran for a considerable distance, although changing direction with puzzling frequency, along the main Confederate line. In front of this strong position Weber was brought to a halt. The news of Sedgwick's misfortune having been brought by Captain S. S. Sumner, General Sumner's son and staff-officer, Weber made a spirited effort to push the enemy, but in vain. Soon he, in turn, began to experience a severe pressure from the Confederate line, reinforced, doubtless, by troops which had taken part in the repulse of Sedgwick; and Kimball's brigade was moved forward to lengthen the line to the south. Kimball's gallant troops—the Fourteenth Indiana and Eighth Ohio on the right, and the Seventh Virginia and One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania on the left—dashed forward with enthusiasm, and became engaged along their whole front, in a contest of the utmost fierceness. Again and again the enemy assumed the aggressive, and displayed the greatest vivacity in counter-attacks, alike upon Kimball and upon Weber. At last Kimball, following up a repulse of the enemy from his centre, dashed forward, capturing three hundred prisoners and several

colors, and establishing his line a considerable distance in advance. The repulse of Sedgwick had enabled the Confederates to renew their hold upon the woods on French's right, and every attempt at a forward movement now found his line enfiladed by artillery.

Morris' fresh troops, under fire for the first time, lost heavily, though in support behind Weber. The Fifth Maryland, whose commanding officer, Major Blumenberg, was wounded, was thrown into disorder, carrying away temporarily a portion of the Fourteenth Connecticut, but the line was handsomely rallied by Colonel Perkins. The brigade was then ordered to report to General Kimball; and first the Fourteenth Connecticut and afterward the One Hundred and Thirtieth Pennsylvania were advanced to the front line, subsequently joined by the One Hundred and Eighth New York. All these regiments came under a savage fire, which they bore with remarkable composure, considering that it was their first action. Later in the engagement the greater portion of this brigade was sent to support Colonel Brooke, of the First Division, where it sustained considerable losses and made no small captures of prisoners and colors.

We have said that Smith's division of the Sixth Corps came upon the field shortly after Sedgwick's bloody repulse, and was first directed to reinforce that division as it emerged from the trap into which it had pushed with such ill advice. One of Smith's brigades, under Hancock, was placed in support of Sedgwick on his left, with a powerful battery, made up of Cowan's, Frank's, and Cotheran's guns. A little later Irwin's brigade of Smith's division was brought in on Hancock's left, and later still Smith's remaining brigade, under General W. H. T. Brooks, was placed on Irwin's left, making

connection, though not a strong or close one, with French.

While thus the perilous gap between Sedgwick and French was closed by the successive arrivals of these brigades from the Sixth Corps, Sumner's old division was forming on French's left. Richardson had been the last to come up, having been delayed in his camps by orders to wait until relieved by Morell's division of the Fifth Corps, and had not begun to cross the Antietam until 9.30 A.M. Arriving on the field, Meagher's Irish brigade formed line of battle in the following order of regiments from right to left: the Sixty-ninth New York, Lieutenant-Colonel James Kelly; the Twenty-ninth Massachusetts, Lieutenant-Colonel Barnes; the Sixty-third New York, Lieutenant-Colonel Fowler; the Eighty-eighth New York, Lieutenant-Colonel Patrick Kelly; and at once moved forward against that part of the enemy's line which may be designated by the name of Piper's House, considerably to our left of the Roulett House, against which French's division had been directed. The Irishmen advanced steadily and rapidly, under a heavy fire, until they had nearly reached the crest of the hill which overlooked Piper's. Meanwhile Caldwell's brigade had formed on Meagher's left, but beyond the range of the immediate infantry contest. Word soon coming to General Richardson that Meagher's ammunition was exhausted, Caldwell's troops were moved by the right flank behind Meagher, and then ordered forward, breaking by companies to the front, the Irish regiments breaking by companies to the rear. This movement was effected with perfect composure, and Caldwell's brigade became the front line, and was soon involved in a most spirited contest, in which both the gallantry of the troops and the exceptional intelligence,

skill and audacity of the regimental commanders were displayed to the highest advantage.

Caldwell's regiments were disposed in the following order : on the right the Sixty-first and Sixty-fourth New York, temporarily consolidated under the command of Colonel Barlow ; the Seventh New York, Captain Bres-tel ; the Eighty-first Pennsylvania, Major H. Boyd McKeen, and the Fifth New Hampshire, Colonel Cross. No sooner had the passage of the lines been effected, than these splendid regiments advanced, and carried the crest overlooking the Piper House, between which and them ran a long stretch of that Sunken Road, so frequently and so perplexingly mentioned in the reports of the battle of Antietam, and here forming the shelter of a determined force of Confederates. For a time, every moment of which cost scores of lives, no further progress is made by the Union troops. And now a daring body of the enemy push forward into the interval between French and Richardson. Kimball, on French's left, throws forward the Seventh Virginia and the One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania, which make a gallant stand, though they cannot cover all the ground. But Brooke is prompt to see and to act. Sending word to General Richardson what has happened and what he purposes to do, he takes with him the Fifty-second New York, Colonel Frank ; the Second Delaware, Captain Stricker ; and his own regiment, the Fifty-third Pennsylvania, under command of Lieutenant-Colonel McMichael, and moves straight against the troops that have pierced our line and are pushing into our rear. The combined attack of Brooke's regiments and of Kimball's left wing, proves too much for the adventurous enemy, and the line is shortly restored. The Fifty-third Pennsylvania carries and holds a position on the extreme right of its division,

and considerably advanced. But Caldwell is now in turn menaced. Under cover of a ridge at some little distance from the left of McKeen's Eighty-first Pennsylvania, the enemy are moving down into our rear. The movement is first discovered by Cross of the Fifth New Hampshire. He waits for no orders, but instantly faces to the left and moves to the rear, dashing into a race with the enemy for the possession of the ridge that commands the field. The two lines actually move parallel to and not far from each other. Cross is ahead, seizes the crest, and pours a volley from his whole front upon the discomfited enemy, who fall back as rapidly as they advanced, leaving the colors of the Fourth North Carolina in the hands of the brave boys from New Hampshire.¹ This action of Cross has been spirited and timely; but it has led his regiment and the Eighty-first Pennsylvania, which, under the gallant McKeen, has promptly followed in support, far to the left; and already the active enemy are searching the gap in Caldwell's line with skirmishers, followed close by their resolute battalions. Into this perilous space, Brooke now throws the Fifty-seventh New York, commanded by Colonel Parisen, and the Sixty-sixth New York, commanded by Captain Julius Wehle. These regiments, led in person by Brooke, who seems to be everywhere at once, together with the unflinching line of Caldwell, are now pushed forward, in one determined effort to carry Piper's House. Again the unequalled capability for quick, spontaneous action on the part of the colonels of Sumner's old division is exhibited at this critical moment. As the line presses onward toward Piper's, Barlow, commanding the consolidated Sixty-first and

¹The flag was brought in by Corporal George Nettleton of Company A, himself wounded.

Sixty-fourth New York, sees, and at once seizes a tactical opportunity. Changing front forward at the right moment and on the right spot, he takes in flank a body of the enemy in the sunken road, pours a deadly volley down their line and puts them to flight, capturing three hundred prisoners with two flags.¹ A determined struggle follows; the enemy even assume the aggressive against Caldwell's centre, but are beaten off by the quick and resolute action of Barlow, who falls desperately wounded. In vain the Confederate batteries pour canister into our advancing lines. Caldwell and Brooke press on unchecked, and in a few minutes occupy Piper's House and the adjacent buildings. The Union line is soon strongly established from Sedgwick's re-formed division on the right, beyond the Dunker Church, through Smith's and French's divisions, to Richardson's division at Piper's. To Richardson's division, did I say? Alas! but a little time passes, and that brave, blunt, kind soldier falls mortally wounded, while directing the action of his batteries, as they respond to the furious fire with which the Confederate artillery now sweeps the field so hardly won.

It is past noon. This is the story, briefly and rudely told, of Antietam's morning. What shall the remainder of the day bring forth? In what condition are our troops? What enemy opposes them? Where are the forces not yet engaged, or but lightly engaged? Where is Burnside's Ninth Corps, which had been ordered in the early morning to cross the stone bridge, far down on the left, and carry the heights commanding Sharpsburg and the road from the Shepherdstown ford, by which Lee's re-

¹ Colonel Barlow reports that a third color was taken, but lost through the subsequent fall of the captor.

maining troops are to be expected, in their hurried march from Harper's Ferry? Where is Porter's Fifth Corps? where Slocum's division of the Sixth, and Couch's unattached division?

Unfortunately, the last-named division, the largest and freshest of the army, has been sent to Maryland Heights to do the work that should have been done by a regiment of cavalry. It has now been recalled, and is marching toward the field of battle, but it is too far off to arrive much before nightfall. Slocum's division has just come up. In fine condition and with full ranks, it stands, formed, ready to move into the woods about the Dunker Church, and renew the contest from which Sedgwick's broken columns have recoiled. Porter's small corps (Humphreys' division not having yet arrived and the other divisions having been greatly depleted by their losses on the Peninsula and at Manassas, with Warren's brigade, also, detached in support of Burnside) lies mainly on the opposite bank of the Antietam Creek, occupying, with its own infantry and with the reserve artillery of the army, the long line between our right, which is under the general command of Sumner, and the left under Burnside. A few battalions of "regulars" have crossed the creek and driven back the enemy's skirmishers in their front; while Porter's artillery sweeps the whole centre with a well-directed fire.

Burnside, after wasting four or five precious hours in partial and feeble efforts, has at last "put in his work;" the Rohrer'sville Bridge is easily carried when once assaulted in adequate force; and the three small divisions of the Ninth Corps begin to cross. Burnside's success will not only cut Lee off from his reinforcements, so anxiously expected by way of the Shepherdstown ford, but will deprive him of his sole remaining avenue of escape. Had

the commander of the Ninth Corps thrown his whole force across the Antietam in the morning, while Jackson, Longstreet and D. H. Hill were wrestling with Hooker, Mansfield, and Sumner, he would have found no formidable force to oppose him. But just as Hooker was beaten before Mansfield was called up; and as Mansfield in turn was beaten before Sumner went into action; so, now, Burnside has waited until the fighting has died down along the whole right before he fairly sets to work to do what is expected of him.

Shall that fighting spring up again on the signal that Burnside has crossed and is engaged? Shall the Confederates, as they are called to meet the advance of Burnside, see the whole line again wrapped in flame; feel the pressure of Porter's and Franklin's fresh corps upon their centre; and hear, through breathless messengers, that the remnants of the First, Twelfth, and Second Corps are threatening their left and rear adown the Hagerstown Road?

The question is a momentous one; it is wrongly decided; and the responsibility of that decision rests, in some measure, on the stout soldier whose name had become a synonym for tireless energy and indomitable pluck. If it is not profanation to say such a thing about Edwin V. Sumner, he had lost courage; not the courage which would have borne him calmly up a ravine swept by canister at the head of the old First Dragoons, but the courage which, in the crash and clamor of action, amid disaster and repulse, enables the commander coolly to calculate the chances of success or failure. He was heartbroken at the terrible fate of the splendid division on which he had so much relied, which he had deemed invincible, and his proximity to the disaster had been so close as to convey a shock from which he had not recov-

ered. The presence of a commander upon the front line of battle is sometimes of great value ; but it is always at the risk, not merely of an undue exposure of his life, but also of his becoming mentally involved in the fortune of the particular division or brigade behind which he stands. Should that be crushed, he may extricate his person, but he cannot extricate his mind therefrom. Everything immediately around him is going to pieces, with horrid noises and more horrid sights ; and he cannot, being human, wholly free himself from the impression of universal disaster.

Something like this was Sumner's state of mind when Franklin, bringing up the fine division of Slocum, formed the brigades of Newton and Torbert, with Bartlett's in reserve, and proposed, about one o'clock, to make a fresh assault upon the woods around Dunker Church. Reluctantly and painfully Sumner interposed, and stayed the advance. We know now that had it been made, with due co-operation from the unbreathed division of Smith and the unbroken though decimated divisions of Richardson and French, it could hardly have failed to succeed. Yet the blame of the most unfortunate decision, not to renew the fighting on the right, rests not wholly or mainly upon Sumner. The prime cause of that great error was in the monstrously exaggerated estimates of Lee's force made at the headquarters of the Army of the Potomac, and transmitted downward to corps commanders, staff, and troops. Headquarters had insisted that Lee crossed the Potomac with over one hundred thousand men ; and, even in his official report of Antietam, General McClellan estimated the force opposed to him at ninety-seven thousand. Had this been the case, or even had Lee commanded upon the ground, at the opening of the day, so many as sixty-five thousand men, the success

of the attack proposed by Franklin might, in spite of Lee's tremendous losses, have been a matter of question, though of question to be answered by trial, since the presence of Porter's corps in the centre, with his powerful artillery, would alone have sufficed to prevent an offensive return on the part of the enemy. But, as a matter of now undoubted fact, all the troops which, from daybreak to dark of the 17th of September, Lee was able to put into action at Antietam was considerably below fifty thousand, including the troops awaiting Burnside's attack and the division of A. P. Hill which, at one o'clock, was still marching toward the battle-field to the music of the artillery. Most of Lee's brigades had been more than once driven in disorder from the ground they occupied, and many, if not most of them, had been reduced to the condition of the First and Twelfth Corps, troops which we set aside in all consideration of the situation of affairs in the afternoon of Antietam.

With the negative placed by Sumner upon Franklin's proposed assault, at one o'clock, closes the battle of Antietam, so far as the history of the Second Corps is concerned with it. It is not necessary to recite the fortunes of the Ninth Corps, in their attempt to carry the heights of Sharpsburg, on the left. The delays which had wasted the long hours of the morning were continued, even after the crossing, and our troops were only effectually advanced at the very moment when A. P. Hill's division, after marching seventeen miles in seven hours, was already forming to attack their flank and drive them back to the river, extinguishing the last hope of destroying Lee's army in the dangerous and altogether false position in which it had been caught at Antietam.

The losses of the Second Corps in this battle were signally large, distributed among the several divisions as follows :

| | Killed. | Wounded. | Missing. | Total. |
|--------------------------------|---------|----------|----------|--------|
| First Division, Richardson.... | 210 | 939 | 16 | 1,165 |
| Second Division, Sedgwick... | 373 | 1,593 | 244 | 2,210 |
| Third Division, French..... | 299 | 1,315 | 136 | 1,750 |
| Artillery Reserve..... | 1 | 9 | .. | 10 |
| Corps Staff..... | .. | 2 | .. | 2 |
| Totals..... | 883 | 3,859 | 396 | 5,138 |

Of the ten general officers who had led the troops into action, four, Major-Generals Richardson and Sedgwick and Brigadier-Generals Dana and Max Weber, had fallen, all with severe, the first-named with fatal, wounds.

The losses in regimental field-officers had also been numerous. Those who were killed were Colonel R. A. Oakford, One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania; Lieutenant-Colonel Philip J. Parisen, Fifty-seventh New York; Lieutenant-Colonel John L. Stetson, Fifty-ninth New York; Major George B. Force, One Hundred and Eighth New York; Major George W. Batchelder, Nineteenth Massachusetts. Major W. D. Sedgwick, the cousin and Assistant Adjutant-General of the commander of the Second Division, received wounds from which he died; also, Surgeon E. H. R. Revere, Twentieth Massachusetts. The other officers killed or mortally wounded were :

Captains Felix Duffy and Timothy L. Shanley, and Lieutenants Patrick J. Kelly, John Conway, and Charles Williams, Sixty-ninth New York.

Captain M. C. Angell, Sixty-first New York.

Captain G. A. Holzborn, First Minnesota.

Captain John S. Downs and Lieutenant Henry K. Chapman, Fourth New York.

Captain Charles Hussler and Lieutenant Hugo Loetze, Seventh New York.

Captains Evan S. Watson, James Leonard, and James Rickards, First Delaware.

Captain D. C. M. Shell, and Lieutenants Benjamin L. Shriver, James Schwarz, and John Garvey, Seventh Virginia.

Captains Samuel Willard and Jarvis E. Blinn, and Lieutenant George H. D. Crosby, Fourteenth Connecticut.

Captain Francis V. Bierworth, and Lieutenants Joseph McHugh and James Dunn, Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania.

Captains Charles H. Whitney, Edward H. Wade, Abraham Florentine, Gould J. Jennings, and Miller Moody, and Lieutenants Stephen C. Roosa, William H. Smurr, Benjamin Van Steinberg, Fifty-ninth New York.

Captains Peter H. Willets and Edward G. Roussel, and Lieutenants A. W. Peabody and Robert J. Parks, Seventy-second Pennsylvania.

Captains Clark S. Simonds and Richard Derby, and Lieutenants Thomas J. Spurr and Frank S. Corbin, of the Fifteenth Massachusetts; and of the Andrew Sharpshooters attached to this regiment as an eleventh company, Captain John Saunders and Lieutenant William Berry.

Captain Timothy Clarke and Lieutenant William Bryan, One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania.

Captains John H. Turrill and A. H. Zacharias, and Lieutenants John A. Clarke and J. B. Eberhard, Seventh Michigan.

Captain Philip R. Schuyler and Lieutenant William H. Van Dike, Eighty-first Pennsylvania.

Captain Charles McPherson and Lieutenant Samuel Dexter, Forty-second New York.

Captain John Kavanagh, and Lieutenants Cadwalader Smith, Patrick W. Lydon, James E. Mackey, George Lynch, and Harry McConnell, Sixty-third New York.

Captains John O'C. Joyce and Patrick F. Clooney, Eighty-eighth New York.

Lieutenants George A. Gay and Charles W. Bean, Fifth New Hampshire.

Lieutenants John Lantry, William Delaney, Charles W. Barnes, and Horace H. Bill, Eighth Ohio.

Lieutenants David B. Tarbox and R. E. Holmes, One Hundred and Eighth New York.

Lieutenant Frederick M. Crissey, Sixty-sixth New York.

Lieutenant Magnus Molkte, Fifth Maryland.

Lieutenant Clarence E. Hill, Thirty-fourth New York.

Lieutenants Henry H. Higbee and Henry A. Folger, Fifty-seventh New York.

Lieutenant John D. Weaver, Fifty-third Pennsylvania.

Lieutenants John Convery and William Wilson, Seventy-first Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant William A. Givler, One Hundred and Thirtieth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Anson C. Cranmer, One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania.

Lieutenants Porter B. Lundy, Edward Ballenger, and Lewis E. Bostwick, Fourteenth Indiana.

Among the officers wounded, besides Generals Sedgwick, Dana, and Max Weber, were Colonel Cross, Fifth New Hampshire; Colonel Barlow, Sixty-first New York; Colonel Hinks, Nineteenth Massachusetts; Colonel Wistar, Seventy-first Pennsylvania; Lieutenant-

Colonel Palfrey, Twentieth Massachusetts; Lieutenant-Colonel James Kelly, Sixty-ninth New York; Lieutenant-Colonel Hopkinson, First Delaware; Major Bentley, Sixty-third New York; Major Devereaux, Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania, and Major Blumenberg, Fifth Maryland. Of General Sumner's staff, Lieutenant-Colonel P. J. Revere, Twentieth Massachusetts, Acting Assistant Inspector-General, and Captain J. C. Audenreid, Aide-de-Camp, were seriously wounded. Captain Coons, Fourteenth Indiana, afterward, as the worthy colonel of that most gallant regiment, killed on the Salient at Spottsylvania, was also severely wounded.

The brigades which had suffered most were those of Dana (898 killed, wounded, and missing), Gorman (740), Kimball (639), Weber (582), Howard (545), Meagher (540), Morris (529). It is a significant fact that the second line of Sedgwick's column sustained the heaviest loss. The regiments having the largest lists of casualties were the Fifteenth Massachusetts (318), the Seventy-second Pennsylvania (237), the First Delaware (230), the Fifty-ninth New York (224), the Seventh Michigan (221), the Sixty-third New York (202), the Sixty-ninth New York (196), the One Hundred and Eighth New York (195), the Fourth New York (187), the Forty-second New York (181), the Fourteenth Indiana (180), the One Hundred and Thirtieth Pennsylvania (178), the Fifth Maryland (163), the Eighth Ohio (161), the Fourteenth Connecticut (156), the Thirty-fourth New York (154), the One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania (152).

Of the officers of the grade of colonel who left the corps, wounded, at Antietam, Hinks and Wistar never returned, having received their deserved promotion to the grade of brigadier-general of volunteers, thereafter to render honorable and conspicuous service in other corps

of the Union army. Barlow likewise received his promotion, won by a gallantry and address of which it is impossible to speak in terms too high; and, after more than a year's absence from the Second Corps, returned to lead one of its divisions in the campaign of 1864. Cross came back from his wounds in season to lead his regiment, with unequalled courage and skill, in the great assault at Marye's Heights in December.

It has been said that the battle of Antietam ended, so far as the history of the Second Corps is concerned, with Sumner's negative upon Franklin's proposed attack upon the woods around Dunker Church. The remaining hours of the day were spent in straightening and strengthening the line, sending scattered men to their regiments, issuing ammunition to the troops, and, in some instances, bringing forward fresh batteries to take the place of those that had been badly handled. No trumpet proclaimed that the battle of Antietam on the right was virtually ended; the troops lay, with the bodies of the Union and Confederate slain all around, in momentary readiness to move forward. The crash and clamor of Burnside's fight, away down on the left, aroused expectation to its height; Pleasonton's batteries pushing forward in the centre, supported by a few battalions of regulars, seemed like the renewal of the combat, while a gallant dash of the Seventh Maine, under Colonel, afterward General, Thomas W. Hyde, made from the front of Slocum's division, for a moment startled both the Union and the Confederate lines; now and then the bustle of the staff presaged new combinations, or the movement of troops to fill the gaps in the line of battle

was taken to mean that hot work was at once to begin ; at intervals the artillery broke out in furious cannonading all along the line, or here and there two ambitious battery commanders tested the range of their guns and the skill of their cannoneers in a duel across the crouching lines of infantry.

Among the galloping staffs which cross that bloody field in the early afternoon, arousing the momentary expectation of renewed attack, is one of especially notable bearing, at which men gaze long as it passes down the jagged line of troops from right to left. At the head rides a general officer whose magnificent physique, bold air, and splendid horsemanship are well calculated to impress the beholder. Behind him ride a group of as dashing aids-de-camp as the army knows. It is Hancock, sent for in haste, from his brigade of the Sixth Corps, to take command of the division at whose head the gallant Richardson has fallen, never to mount horse or draw sword more. It is not amid the pomp of the review, with bands playing and well-ordered lines, but on the trampled battle-field, strewn with bloody stretchers and the wreck of caissons and ambulances, the dead and dying thick around, the wounded still limping and crawling to the rear, with shells shrieking through the air, that Hancock meets and greets the good regiments he is to lead in a score of battles. The lines are ragged from shot and shell ; the uniforms are rent and soiled from hedge, fence, and ditch ; the bands are engaged in carrying off the wounded, or assisting the regimental surgeons at their improvised hospitals ; scarcely twenty-one hundred men remain with the colors of this fine, strong division.

While Hancock is, for the first time, drawing his sword in the Second Corps, another general officer is being carried from the field, bleeding from three wounds, mourn-

ing a personal loss in his gallant relative and staff-officer, who has been killed by his side ; but mourning a deeper and a dearer loss in the broken battalions that have been the pride of his heart. It is Sedgwick, leaving the Second Corps to become, when his wounds shall heal, the beloved leader of the Sixth, often to bring his new command to the succor and support of the old in the crisis of some hard-fought battle ; always to welcome his old comrades with a hearty kindness, all his own, whether in camp or on the march ; and to remain until the fatal 9th of May, 1864, in a peculiar sense, the hero and idol of both corps.

CHAPTER V.

THE ANTIETAM TO THE RAPPAHANNOCK.

THE day after the battle of Antietam, the Second Corps lay in the immediate presence of the enemy. Couch's division had come up late in the evening of the 17th, and Humphrey's division of the Fifth Corps arrived on the morning of the 18th. So far as an instant expectation of the renewal of the fighting would permit, the wounded were drawn into their respective lines, and the dead who lay within reach were buried. Between the two armies, however, lay hundreds of the slain, covered by the rifles of the opposing skirmishers. Under the pretence, and doubtless, in part, from a sincere desire to secure the burial of these and the recovery of the more desperately wounded, but, in part also, from that uneasy disposition to "fraternize" which every "officer of the day" has had to contend with, unauthorized arrangements were, during the 18th, made at several points between the Union and the Confederate pickets; arrangements which caused much embarrassment to the commanding general in regard to the necessary movements of troops, the Confederates complaining of these as in violation of "the flag of truce." At last it became necessary to send word through the lines that all such arrangements were unauthorized, and must be regarded as abrogated.

On the morning of the 19th, orders for a general attack having been given, the troops advanced; but it was found that Lee had retreated to the Virginia side, the

intended invasion of Pennsylvania having been abandoned in consequence of the terrible losses sustained at South Mountain and Antietam, and the threatening attitude taken by the Army of the Potomac. During the few succeeding days, while Lee was engaged in reorganizing his command in the Valley of Virginia, General Sumner, still in command of the Twelfth Corps, General Williams, as well as of his own, moved to the vicinity of Harper's Ferry, occupying Bolivar Heights with the Second Corps.

During the month of September occurred the following changes among the field officers of the corps. Colonel Barlow, having been promoted to be Brigadier-General, was succeeded in the colonelcy of the Sixty-first New York by Lieutenant-Colonel Miles. Lieutenant-Colonel Stephen Miller, First Minnesota, resigned September 17th; Lieutenant-Colonel John G. Kelly, Seventh Virginia, September 10th; Major Caspar Keller, Seventh New York, September 28th. Two officers were dismissed the service: Major Robert M. Andrews, Second Delaware, September 4th, and Colonel Henry M. Baker, Eighty-eighth New York, September 22d.

Early in October occurred an event of much importance in this history. The gallant old soldier who had organized, and thus far led, the corps, received a leave of absence, and Major-General Darius N. Couch, who had won much distinction on the Peninsula at the head of the First Division of the Fourth Corps, now become the Third Division of the Sixth Corps, was called to the command. Between the two commanders there were marked contrasts at some points, and marked resemblances at others. The oldest corps commander of the army was succeeded by one of the youngest. Sumner was of magnificent presence; though never arrogant or unkind, the



MAJ.-GEN. D. N. COUCH
Commanding Second Army Corps
OCTOBER 9, 1862 TO JUNE 10, 1863

consciousness of high rank showed itself in every lineament and every movement; though not boastful, he was never backward in self-assertion, whether for himself or his troops. Couch, on the other hand, was a slight man, of singularly quiet demeanor, whose unaffected modesty found a natural expression in every tone, look, and gesture; who shrank from every form of display, and could scarcely tolerate a staff large enough to do the daily work of his headquarters in camp or in the field. Sumner had a daring, adventurous disposition, which could hardly bear to take account of obstacles; Couch possessed a strongly conservative temper, which led him carefully to scrutinize every project that involved a possible collision with the enemy, and to take unwearying pains to gain an advantage or avert a peril. But when the battle was once joined the two men were as much alike as ever were father and son, in their indomitable courage and impetuous energy. The caution of his temper never led the younger soldier to exaggerate the numbers of the enemy or to distrust the valor and endurance of his troops. When he had done all that in him lay to prepare for action and insure success, he went into the actual conflict without an apprehension of defeat. Our great war brought out a wonderful wealth of manly valor; but in all the armies of America, on either side, rode no man across the bloody spaces of the battle-field more calm and resolute. Danger never depressed or dulled his faculties. On the contrary, it gave just that degree of stimulus which brought them into their keenest activity; and those only truly knew the man who heard his voice and looked into his eyes in the crisis of some terrible fight.

But while the new-comer was thus worthy to succeed, the Second Corps could not bid farewell to General

Sumner without deep regret. In spite of his increasing infirmities, in spite of the terrible disaster at Antietam, officers and men believed in him and loved to follow him. Just, high-minded, chivalric, of splendid bearing and fiery courage, of high military rank and long and honorable service in previous wars, of great personal kindness of feeling and always accessible to his soldiers, he was in every respect the man to impress profoundly a body of generous volunteers, who only asked to be shown their duty and to be bravely led. The Second Corps could not have become quite all it was under any other chief; and in relinquishing the command it was impossible that he should wholly take himself away. The best part, the immortal and unfading, the unerring and un-mistaking part of Edwin V. Sumner, the honor, truth, courage, and devotion to duty, which informed his whole life and inspired his every act, could not be divorced from the troops he had trained and had led into their first battles. Thousands of the brave men in the ranks, hundreds of young and rising officers, had obtained from him their ideas of soldierly duty; had followed him in toil and danger; and when, later in the war, after the body of the brave dragoon had been laid in the dust, one of the old Peninsula regiments was called to leave one-half its numbers, whether in victory or defeat, upon some bloody slope, those who looked on could see, in the quick and dashing advance or in the slow and sullen retreat, something of the spirit of him from whose dying lips fell the boast:

“The Second Corps never lost a color or a gun.”

Under its new commander, who joined it October 9th, the corps remained for several weeks at Bolivar Heights, with headquarters at Harper's Ferry. The only episode which interrupted the pleasant monotone of rest and equipment, after the fatigues of the Manassas and Antie-

tam campaigns, was a reconnoissance conducted by General Hancock, with the First Division, October 16th, down the Valley to Charlestown, with the view to discovering whether the enemy were there in force. The reconnoissance developed nothing but cavalry, supporting a battery of artillery, which was handled by a Confederate captain of remarkable merit, who defended his position with great daring and tenacity, holding his own a long time against superior weight of fire, and only yielding ground to an actual advance of infantry. The brave fellow¹ was found, minus a foot, in a house near Charlestown, when our troops occupied the place.

During the stay at Bolivar Heights, the corps was joined by the Nineteenth Maine, Colonel Fred. D. Sewall, and the One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania, Colonel Dennis Heenan. The Fifth Maryland, which had joined just before Antietam, was detached. Colonel Henry W. Wharton, Second Delaware, and Major Charles W. Smith, Seventy-first Pennsylvania, were honorably discharged; while Colonel John Burke, Sixty-third New York, was dismissed.

On October 30th, the Second Corps, forming the head of the infantry column, which was to consist of the First, Second, Third, Fifth, Sixth, and Ninth Corps, the Twelfth being left to guard the line of the Upper Potomac, crossed the Shenandoah, and, passing around the base of Loudon Heights into the valley, moved nearly to Hill Grove. General McClellan's object in this movement may be stated in his own words

"It was my intention if, upon reaching Ashby's, or any

¹ This officer appears, from Major McClellan's *Memoirs of General Stuart*, to have been Captain B. H. Smith, Jr., of the Richmond Howitzer Battalion.

other pass, I found that the enemy were in force between it and the Potomac, in the valley of the Shenandoah, to move into the valley and endeavor to gain their rear. I hardly hoped to accomplish this, but did expect that by striking in between Culpeper Court House and Little Washington, I could either separate their army and beat them in detail, or else force them to concentrate as far back as Gordonsville, and thus place the Army of the Potomac in position either to adopt the Fredericksburg line of advance upon Richmond, or to be removed to the Peninsula, if, as I apprehended, it were found impossible to supply it by the Orange and Alexandria Railroad beyond Culpeper."

In pursuance of this plan the army, the Second Corps leading, moved along the Blue Ridge, occupying successively the several passes over the mountains westward of the line of march, reaching the little village at the foot of Snicker's Gap on November 3d. During this day an interesting incident occurred near the head of the column. A small body of cavalry, afterward reported to be Ashby's men who had been cut off by our unexpected advance, were observed on the left, and exchanged some shots with our skirmishers. In spite of this hostile demonstration, however, the general was disposed to believe them to be Union cavalrymen, who had mistaken us for Confederates, and under that impression had repelled all attempts at familiarity. The staff halted, and a dashing officer of the Irish brigade, borrowing a guidon from the leading battery, rode confidently out toward the cavalry, to form their better acquaintance. His approach was permitted, but he accosted the strangers only to find a pistol presented to his breast, and to be hustled off by his captors, who, making a wide detour at a rapid pace, sought to get around the head of

the column and through the gap into the Shenandoah Valley. Fortunately, however, the raiders encountered one of Pleasanton's regiments, whereupon the rescued captive snatched the flag from the breast of the Confederate who had secreted it there, and returning to camp restored it to the battery commander, who was grieving over its loss.

While at this place, an order was received detaching General William W. Burns from the Second Corps, and assigning him to the command of a division of the Ninth. General Burns carried away with him the respect and affection of his late command, the Philadelphia brigade, as well of all his associates—respect earned by his gallantry and skill in battle; affection won by his uniform courtesy and kindness in camp.

On the 4th of November the Second Corps reached Upperville, the cavalry in front having an artillery duel with Stuart, who was moving to escape through Ashby's Gap. The night of reaching Upperville was cold and gloomy. General Couch had an inveterate repugnance to making his headquarters in a house, greatly preferring the benignant shelter of a Virginia rail fence. But on this occasion, there being great probability of frequent despatches to be received and sent, he gave Captain Morgan, his chief of artillery, permission to select a house for headquarters. Delighted at this concession to the bodily infirmities of the staff, Morgan galloped gayly into the yard of a spacious mansion on the outskirts of the town. Here was an old man, evidently the proprietor, somewhat shaken by the recent artillery fire and the galloping and pistol-shots of the cavalry. "Good-evening," said Morgan. "Good-evening," responded the native. "General Couch proposes to make his headquarters at your house to-night—that is, if you have no

objection." Now, the old gentleman had a great many objections, but as he did not dare to express them, he straightway began with one accord to make excuse. Of course he would be delighted to have the general with him, but he was afraid he could not make him comfortable. Perhaps the general had better go where he could be better accommodated. "But," quoth Morgan, argumentatively, "you have a large house." This could not be denied, as anyone could see it at a glance, so the luckless proprietor had to admit that the house was large. "But," he added, eagerly, "I have a large family." "Well, now," asked Morgan, "what family have you got?" "In the first place," said the old gentleman, "I have three nieces." "Say not another word; we'll take the house!" And we did take the house, and three saucier vixens could hardly be found in all rebeldom.

During the movement along the Blue Ridge, and during the few days which followed, a curious psychological phenomenon appeared. Although this was one of the best-disciplined commands of the army, with a high repute for good order, a mania seized the troops for killing sheep. On the Peninsula there had been no sheep to kill; and, while on the march to Antietam, our men had scrupulously respected the loyalty of Western Maryland. But when the fat and fleecy flocks of the country through which we were now called to pass came in sight, discipline for the moment gave way, at least *quoad* mutton. At first the night was taken for forays, but soon the passion rose to absolute fury. In vain did officers storm and swear; in vain was the sabre used freely over the heads of the offenders who were caught; in vain, even, did the provost guard of one division turn about and fire ball-cartridge, from the road, at fellows who deliberately left the ranks to go across the fields. General

Couch was outraged; he instructed each division commander to assemble a court-martial for the trial of these offenders; and soon, every evening, after coming into camp, three courts were in session in the Second Corps, with sheep-stealers before them, and sharp and summary were the punishments inflicted; but all to no purpose—the killing went on as bad as ever.

Of the three division commanders, General Hancock was peculiarly sensitive to the slightest imputation of indiscipline. Accordingly, of all three it was he who issued the sternest orders and swore the loudest oaths. One day Hancock, having observed some soldiers of the Irish Brigade, after falling out of ranks upon some pretence, steal around a bit of woods manifestly bound on plunder, determined to make an example. Accordingly he left the column with his staff, and galloping rapidly around the woods from the opposite side, he came upon the group gathered around an unfortunate victim, upon which one of the number was just proceeding to make anatomical observations. The less guilty members of the party, being less closely engaged, caught a glimpse of the coming doom in time to climb over a high stone fence and escape; but upon the principal offender, taken *in flagrante delictu*, Hancock pounced with drawn sword and eyes flashing fire. Down on his knees went the wretch, scared by the general's aspect. "Arrah, dear general, don't be the death of me; I didn't do it, indade I didn't." "You infernal liar," shouted the general, "what do you mean by telling me that? I saw you, you scoundrel! I'll teach you to disobey orders; I'll teach you to kill sheep!" And, with this, crushing out the last hope of poor Paddy, he flourished his sword as if about to begin execution; when, in the most opportune moment, up jumped the innocent subject of the controversy, and giving vent to its

feelings in a quavering ba-a! ran off, while, amid the shouts of the staff, the general put up his sabre and rode away. We may firmly believe that the Irishman was hardly less pleased than the sheep. Let us hope that the scare he got destroyed his appetite for mutton, and that he returned forevermore to his native pork.

Of all the offenders in this respect, the Irish Brigade received the most blame; but there is some reason to accept the indignant disclaimer of their commander, who declared that a large number of the sheepskins found in his camps had really been placed there by the men of the Fifth New Hampshire after they had eaten the carcasses. Strangely enough, this passion for killing sheep disappeared as quickly as it had appeared; and never afterward, so far as the writer knows, did anything of the sort occur to tarnish the good name of the Second Corps. It was an epidemic coming and going inexplicably, in flat contradiction to the general character of the troops, and while it lasted "affecting" only sheep of all the animal creation.

On the 6th of November the Second Corps reached Rectortown, and here General Sumner rejoined the army, but did not resume command of the corps, since the scheme of forming "grand divisions," consisting of two corps each, had been determined upon, and the veteran had been selected for one of these high commands. It was while the corps was in this camp that, on the night of the 7th of November, the order was received from Washington which relieved General McClellan, finally, from the command of the Army of the Potomac, which was given to General Burnside. Whatever may be said of General McClellan's limitations as a commander, it was absolutely inexcusable to supersede him by Burnside. The first commander of the Army of the Po-

tomac had not one fault or deficiency which was not found greatly exaggerated in his successor, while of McClellan's many high qualifications Burnside had hardly a trace. The new commander was the sweetest, kindest, most true-hearted of men, loving and lovable, dashing, romantic, picturesque, but he was not fit for the command of an army; he knew he was not; he had himself publicly said so, and nobody had the least excuse for believing otherwise. Those who selected Burnside for this fearful responsibility, against his own will, can only be excused from criminality by the plea that they were not judges of character; that they could not interpret acts, or even read the plainest indications of physiognomy.

Even had the administration been prepared to replace General McClellan by an officer of equal ability, it would still have been fairly a matter of hesitation, for it is a serious thing to strike at a sentiment like that with which the army regarded their first chief. Such a degree of affection and confidence itself constitutes a powerful reinforcement to that military strength which can be at any time called out and used without regard to the personality of the commander.

In the grief and indignation with which, at Warrenton, the soldiers received the news that the commander in whom they delighted was again taken away from them, the Second Corps shared fully. On the 10th of November the three divisions were drawn up on the left side of the Centreville Pike, in columns of regiments with intervals sufficient to give place for sections of a battery. On the right of the pike stood the Fifth Corps in a similar formation. Between those two gallant corps, so long his comrades, slowly and sadly rode their beloved chief, taking a last farewell. Every heart of the thirty thousand was filled with love and grief; every voice was raised in

shouts expressive of devotion and indignation ; and when the chief had passed out of sight, the romance of war was over for the Army of the Potomac.

No other commander ever aroused the same enthusiasm in the troops, whether in degree or in kind. The soldiers fairly loved to look upon him ; the sight of him brought cheers spontaneously from every lip ; his voice was music to every ear. Let military critics or political enemies say what they will, he who could so move upon the hearts of a great army, as the wind sways long rows of standing corn, was no ordinary man ; nor was he who took such heavy toll of Joseph E. Johnston and Robert E. Lee an ordinary soldier. How sweet to him, as he passed up the road in his banishment and unmerited disgrace, were the cheers of those thirty thousand comrades, rising and swelling upon the air ! Himself the very soul of manly gentleness, courtesy, and kindness, the acclamations which drowned even the roar of the artillery, and which followed him far out of sight, were a farewell which no heart could more fully appreciate or more fondly cherish.

One of the first acts of General Burnside, on assuming command, was to carry out the purpose of McClellan in the formation of Grand Divisions. The following was the organization effected :

RIGHT GRAND DIVISION.

MAJOR-GENERAL E. V. SUMNER, COMMANDING.

Second Corps, Major-General D. N. COUCH.

Ninth Corps, Brigadier-General O. B. WILLCOX.

CENTRE GRAND DIVISION.

MAJOR-GENERAL JOSEPH HOOKER, COMMANDING.

Third Corps, Brigadier-General GEORGE STONEMAN.

Fifth Corps, Brigadier-General DANIEL BUTTERFIELD.

LEFT GRAND DIVISION.

MAJOR-GENERAL WILLIAM B. FRANKLIN, COMMANDING.

Sixth Corps, Major-General WILLIAM F. SMITH.

First Corps, Brigadier-General J. F. REYNOLDS.

The artillery was in the main distributed among the divisions of the several corps, though with a strong reserve. The cavalry remained under the command of General Pleasonton. The strength of the army present for duty on the day when Burnside took command is stated at 127,574.

In general, the army was in good physical condition and well equipped. One exception only requires to be mentioned. During the march from Harper's Ferry to Warrenton, and even, in a degree, while at the former place, a distressing hoof-disease had prevailed among the horses of the army. The ravages of this epizootic grew more and more terrible as the army advanced, until at Rectortown and Warrenton both cavalry and artillery were to a great extent disabled. The quartermaster's service was not proportionally disturbed, the tougher mules resisting the conditions, whatever these were, whether lime in the water, or food, or climate, which favored the extension of the pest. From one battery alone, of the Second Corps, sixty horses had to be turned in as useless. So far did this go, that many guns were sent back to Washington by rail, there not being serviceable animals enough to draw them.

As Burnside, with this magnificent army in his hand, a worthy command even for a Napoleon, stood at Warrenton, deliberating where he should deliver his blow, two courses lay open to him. The one was to move directly forward, crossing the Rappahannock, as Meade

was to do a year later ; to fight Lee at Brandy Station or Culpepper, should he be found there in force ; or, failing that, to cross, in turn, the Rapidan and take the direct route to Richmond. The other course was to move to the left and seize Fredericksburg, on the right bank of the lower Rappahannock, before Lee should apprehend his design. It was the latter course which Burnside resolved to take. Its success required three good stiff, though not excessive, days' marches, on the part of at least the leading corps, with prompt co-operation from Washington in the way of providing rations, beef-cattle, and, above all, pontoons, at Acquia Creek. Of these latter needs, General Halleck, the commander-in-chief, at Washington, was duly notified.

The Second Corps, in advance, left Warrenton on the 15th, and marching steadily, but with all-night rests, reached Falmouth, on the left bank of the Rappahannock, opposite Fredericksburg, in the early afternoon of the 17th. The few pickets of the enemy who were on this bank hastily retired as the head of the corps came up. Fredericksburg was at this moment occupied by a regiment of cavalry, four companies of infantry, and a light battery. The guns of the latter were to be seen in position on the northern outskirts of the city, the drivers and cannoneers lying idly about in groups, apparently expecting our approach, but also expecting a fair notice. It pleased General Couch, however, to order Captain Pettit to take his guns by a round-about way, through some deep ravines well to the rear of Falmouth, and to climb, from behind, a steep hill of considerable height exactly opposite the Confederate battery ; the result of which was that Pettit's six Parrotts began slinging solid shot and shell in among the enemy's guns and gunners before they had the faintest notion that the ball was about to open.

Gallantly they sprang to their pieces, but it was of no use ; Pettit had the advantage in elevation, his guns were six to their four, and, besides, he had cannoneers who could hardly be matched in any battery of the regular army. Within five minutes every man had been driven from the pieces, and had taken refuge behind the adjacent houses and walls. There stood the four guns abandoned in plain view. It was a tempting sight ; both Couch and Sumner, who had watched the contest from among Pettit's guns, fairly ached to throw across some infantry and secure the prize. But the pontoons had not yet been heard from ; the Falmouth ford was unknown ; and General Sumner conceived that his instructions precluded him from crossing until bridges could be laid. Meanwhile some of the Confederate artillery-men, braver than the rest, dashed out from cover with a prolonge, and attaching it to the nearest piece, dragged it behind the house. In vain did Pettit send one shot and another after the gun, which he had come to regard as his personal property ; the whole affair took but an instant, and the marauders proved but a flying mark. Three times, at irregular intervals, was this repeated, either by the same soldiers or by their comrades, and at last the tempting prizes were removed from sight. The guns were there all the same, and could be taken with equal ease by any infantry crossing ; but as they were out of sight, they exerted a much less potent attraction, and the generals soon gave their attention to posting the fast-arriving regiments along the left bank.

And now we have to tell of another of those miserable blunders which mar the history of the war, each one costing its hundreds or its thousands of lives. General Burnside had notified the authorities at Washington that it was absolutely necessary that pontoon boats, to enable

him to cross the Rappahannock, should arrive simultaneously with the head of the column; yet the pontoons were not on hand when Couch came up on the 17th, nor yet on the 18th, nor yet on the 19th, nor indeed until the 25th. In consequence General Sumner was obliged by his instructions to concentrate the Second and Ninth Corps, subject to the mortification of every day seeing fresh Confederate brigades occupying and fortifying the strong positions behind Fredericksburg, positions which were in four weeks to be fruitlessly assailed at the cost of thirteen thousand men.

The enemy arriving on the opposite bank during the first few days were under the command of Longstreet. They apparently took not a little interest in the change of Union commanders, saluting our pickets along the river with such inquiries as these: "Where's Little Mac?" "Wasn't he black enough for you?" "Hope you'll find someone with long enough heels, by and by!" Time passed monotonously during the weeks following. The troops commenced, though without system, the construction of winter quarters; and fortifications were built on our own side of the river, as if we anticipated an attack from the enemy. Of the position before us, little was known beyond what could be seen. Although General Burnside had occupied the city and the country beyond, in August, with the Ninth Corps, coming up from North Carolina, he was without information fit to found his plan of operations upon; and even regarding the field apparently within our view, even regarding the fatal plain so soon to be drenched with the best blood of the army, a strange lack of knowledge existed—a remarkable instance of which, out of the writer's personal experience, will shortly be related.

In his history of the Army of the Potomac, Mr. Swin-

ton asserts that he knows, from facts stated to him by that corps commander who enjoyed most of Burnside's confidence, that the latter did not desire or intend to fight before the next spring; and that he selected the Fredericksburg route, not as the most feasible one for an actual advance on Richmond, but as affording the most available point for supplying the troops throughout the winter, hoping in the spring to secure the President's consent to transfer the army to the Peninsula. Whether Mr. Swinton's information was correct or not, it was certain that the temper of the administration was not such as to tolerate even the suggestion of such a course. It was not for this that McClellan had been removed; and so, early in December, General Burnside, with how much or little real reluctance we cannot tell, undertook that series of operations, beginning on the night of the 10th, culminating on the afternoon of the 13th, and concluding during the night of the 15th, which are embraced in the term, *The Battle of Fredericksburg*.

In preparation for the impending action, the Second Corps was, December 9th, reinforced by five large new regiments, four of them belonging to the nine-months' class, generally composed of excellent material, with, in some cases, exceptionally good officers, but, of course, without experience. These were the One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania, Colonel Hiram L. Brown, assigned to Caldwell's (First) brigade of the First Division; the Twentieth-seventh Connecticut, Colonel R. S. Bostwick, assigned to Zook's (Third) brigade of the First Division; the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Pennsylvania, Colonel W. W. Jennings, assigned to the brigade of the Second Division formerly commanded by General Max Weber, now by Colonel Norman J. Hall, of the Seventh Michigan; the Twenty-fourth New

Jersey, Colonel W. B. Robertson, and the Twenty-eighth New Jersey, Colonel M. N. Wisewell, both assigned to Kimball's brigade of the Third Division. Of these regiments, the first only had been enlisted for three years. Another change in the constituents of the corps, which was not in the nature of a formal reinforcement of the command, occurred at this juncture, in the substitution of the Twenty-eighth Massachusetts, under Colonel Richard Byrnes, an excellent officer of the old army, for the Twenty-ninth Massachusetts, which we saw join the corps after Fair Oaks. The Twenty-eighth was originally raised for the Irish Brigade, but was, by some blunder, sent to Port Royal, and only returned to the north in season to join its corps in the great battle of December.

During the month of November, Colonel Charles F. Johnson, Eighty-first Pennsylvania, who had been severely wounded during the Seven Days, and Lieutenant-Colonel Philip G. Lichtenstein, Fifty-second New York, wounded at Antietam, resigned their commissions. Colonel Johnson was succeeded in the colonelcy of the Eighty-first by Lieutenant-Colonel McKeen.



MAJ.-GEN. O. O. HOWARD

MAJ.-GEN. DAVID B. BIRNEY

MAJ.-GEN. JOHN GIBBON

MAJ.-GEN. WM. H. FRENCH

CHAPTER VI.

FREDERICKSBURG.

As a battle, Fredericksburg differs markedly from Antietam. The plan of the earlier action was clear, intelligible, and thoroughly practical. Its single fault was a negative one: it failed to comprehend the high and rugged ground on the extreme Confederate left, from which, as narrated, Stuart's horse-artillery shelled Sedgwick's column. But this was hidden from a distant view by dense woods; McClellan had no knowledge of it; and, in the heat of action, no one appears to have caught its significance. With the exception noted, the plan of battle was perfect; the causes of failure were found wholly in the execution. Hooker was too fast; Burnside too slow; Sumner, who should have moved at the first sign of daylight of the 17th, if not during the night of the 16th, did not receive his orders until 7.20 A.M.; when he did move, it was, as we saw, in a way to throw his divisions out of supporting distance; by the time Franklin got up, the disasters already sustained from lack of concert required, or seemed to require, his fine corps to be broken up until no strong, efficient column was left. At Fredericksburg the failure arose from the utter absence of anything like a plan of operations. The troops were thrown over the river in a sort of blind hope that so splendid an army, in such overpowering numbers, would somehow achieve a victory. General Burnside did, indeed, after the battle, attempt to state what he doubtless

believed to have been his plan ; but this does not consist with his actual orders prior to the action, nor do those orders consist with each other.

What in fact occurred was this : On the left, Franklin, with his own Grand Division, reinforced by two divisions of the Third and one division of the Ninth Corps, crossed two miles below Fredericksburg and was beaten, with considerable loss in three of the nine divisions under his command ; beaten, as Burnside charged, from not putting in enough men ; beaten, as Franklin alleged, from unintelligible and contradictory orders. Coincidentally with this, Sumner threw the remainder of the army directly across into the city, and was beaten solely on account of the strength of the fortified position he was ordered to assault, with terrible losses in six of the nine divisions engaged. There was, upon the right, no question of disobedience of orders, of lack of energy or failure to put in the troops. The losses here comprised seven-tenths of the killed and wounded of the army. It was on the right that the Second Corps was called to show its quality during those grim December days.

On the evening of the 10th, with the coming on of dusk, General Hunt, the chief of artillery, began to occupy the left bank of the Rappahannock with guns to cover the crossing of the two columns. The whole riverside became one vast battery. One hundred and forty-seven pieces were put into position. The troops generally had gone to rest, with no premonition of the coming battle ; but every headquarters was alive with the work of preparation. Before daybreak the regiments had been called to arms ; and in silence and in darkness the several divisions were concentrated in the neighborhood of the Phillips House, where General Sumner had his headquarters, and there halted, awaiting the construction of

the bridges, by the engineer corps, at Lacy's. And here occurred the first of the series of fatal errors which have made the name of Fredericksburg so terrible in our history. If, indeed, the crossing into the city was to take place at all, and the heights in rear were really to be assaulted, it was of supreme importance that it should be done quickly. Jackson's corps was known to be extended far down the river, his remotest division being not less than eighteen miles from Fredericksburg. And yet many hours were wasted in futile attempts to lay the bridges by which the troops should cross into the city, all from a failure to observe the most obvious condition of the situation.

It was manifestly not possible that the Confederates should oppose any large body of troops to a column actually crossing into Fredericksburg, since the hills on the left (Stafford) bank commanded, not only the low ground of the city, but the broad plain which stretches from the city back to the heights on which were the Confederate intrenchments. But it was possible, and was to be expected, that the enemy should occupy the stone cellars along the river, and deep rifle-pits dug here and there, with hardy and tenacious marksmen, who would have the pontoniers at their mercy. So complete, indeed, was their command of the situation, that when the work began at the Lacy House, on the morning of the 11th, Barksdale's Mississippians did not think it worth while to interfere, at first, with the detachment of Fiftieth New York engineers which had been charged with this duty, but allowed the bridge to be laid nearly two-thirds across the stream, when, by one volley, the pontoons were swept clear of men. The position of the enemy, thus revealed, was, for an hour, pounded by our artillery, from right and left, until it was supposed that a sufficient

effect had been produced, when the engineers were again ordered forward, but to no better effect; again and again the hopeless effort was renewed. "They made," says Lieutenant-Colonel Fiser, commanding the Seventeenth Mississippi, "nine desperate attempts to finish their bridges, but were severely punished and promptly repulsed at every attempt."

Two of Hancock's regiments, the Fifty-seventh and Sixty-sixth New York, had been ordered at midnight to support the engineers; and these regiments, unprotected and at the gravest disadvantage, suffered severely. Lieutenant-Colonel James H. Bull, Sixty-sixth New York, was mortally, and Lieutenant-Colonel A. B. Chapman, commanding the Fifty-seventh, severely, wounded, both officers of great efficiency; and many in each regiment fell as this bloody farce was being played. In vain the artillery pounded the town with redoubled fury. It was difficult or impossible to depress any considerable portion of the guns to command the positions occupied by the defenders.¹ Now and then a shell would burst in some cellar, killing or wounding every occupant; but other windows still vomited flame, whenever the pontoniers showed any sign of life; and still the hours wore away while the Confederates, now in full possession of our purpose, were concentrating their forces. At last the thing which should have been done at the very beginning was permitted to be done. Colonel Hall's brigade

¹ The Confederate reports state that a detachment of the Eighth Florida was, after the wounding of its commanding officer, considerably demoralized by our artillery fire. Not only did they refrain from firing lest they should bring down upon them shots from Hunt's artillery, but one lieutenant in this detachment went so far as to draw his pistol, threatening to kill some of the Mississippi sharpshooters if they fired again.

of the Second Division, to which had been assigned the advance into the city, had been lying since early morning close up to the bluff at the Lacy House. Here, in consultation with General Hunt, chief of artillery, and Colonel Woodbury, chief of engineers, Colonel Hall represented the readiness of his soldiers to jump into boats, push across the river, drive out the enemy's riflemen, and, from the other side, cover the completion of the bridges. These eminent staff officers answering for the commander-in-chief, Colonel Hall called for volunteers. His own regiment, the Seventh Michigan, responded to a man, and Captain Weymouth, commanding the Nineteenth Massachusetts, proffered his regiment to support the Seventh. The affair was at once arranged. The artillery began firing with extraordinary rapidity, in order to cover the preparations for the movement, and to disconcert the marksmen on the opposite bank.

When all was ready, Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Baxter led a party of the Seventh down the bank on the run; the boats pushed off, the men leaped into them as they cleared the shore; the rowers, some of whom were pontoniers, some men of the infantry, plied their oars as for dear life; Baxter was wounded, and others dropped into the bottom of the boats; but there was no pause. A hundred gallant fellows jumped ashore, and hastily forming, charged into the water-street, drove the enemy out of the rifle-pits, or smoked them out of their cellars. Lieutenant Emery falls dead at the head of his men; but in a few minutes the immediate front is cleared and thirty prisoners are captured. Already other boats are coming to land. The Nineteenth Massachusetts is up, and gains ground to the right; while the Seventh moves to the left. The lower street is ours; and now the pontoniers, coming out from shelter, push forward the bridge. The

Twentieth Massachusetts had been ordered to cross the moment the last plank should be down upon the bridge ; but the order was incorrectly transmitted, and this regiment, also, rowed over in boats which were to frame the second bridge. Relieved from the murderous fire which had mocked their efforts, the engineers worked like beavers ; and a broad, firm track soon spanned the two banks. Over it crowded the Fifty-ninth New York, then the Forty-second, " Old Tammany," and, last of Hall's brigade, the new One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Pennsylvania.

We have carried the river-street ; the first bridge is laid ; but the situation is still critical. The enemy hold the higher streets, as well as both the upper and lower ends of the city ; and, from three sides, their deadly fire is dropping among the fast-arriving troops which are beginning to crowd the narrow space that has been gained by the gallantry of the two leading regiments. The Twentieth Massachusetts is called upon to clear the street which leads from the bridge-head up through the city. It is a perilous task ; the enemy's fire sweeps straight down to the water, while, as the head of column crosses every successive street running parallel with the bank, it is greeted by volleys from the flank. But never was better regiment called to perilous task than the Twentieth Massachusetts ; and George Macy is at its head. " I cannot," says Colonel Hall, " I cannot presume to express all that is due the officers and men of this regiment, for the unflinching bravery and splendid discipline shown in the execution of this order. Platoon after platoon was swept away, but the head of the column did not falter. Ninety-seven officers and men were killed or wounded in the space of about fifty yards." But the sacrifice has availed ; the Mississippi regiments, resisting stubbornly, fall back ; the ground is cleared for the ad-

vance of fresh troops from behind. The Fifty-ninth supports the Twentieth Massachusetts on the left with considerable loss. Owen's brigade now crosses; and, moving still further to the left, beyond the Fifty-ninth, clears the ground of the enemy's skirmishers and advances as far to the front as Caroline Street.

When Howard's division began to cross, General Couch, who never failed to watch every detail that concerned his troops, observing that the road passing by the Lacy House to the river-bank was exposed to the view of the enemy, directed the column down a rugged and wooded ravine close by the Lacy House. The artillerists on the opposite heights could not see the column here; but, as they knew our troops were moving somewhere, they continued to search the whole crest with their shells. In order to draw their fire from the troops, General Couch took his stand, with his staff,¹ in a conspicuous position on the bluff. The effort was eminently successful, and the staff were soon the target of many guns; but, as the distance was considerable, no damage was done beyond spattering horses and men with mud thrown up by the plunging shot. Just at this moment it happened that some members of the band of a new nine-months' regiment, whose colonel had ordered "the music" to remain behind while the fighting men went over the bridge, strolled up to the bluff, attracted by curiosity; and the fellow whose business it was to beat the big bass-drum set it deliberately down and cast his eyes, in an interested way, over the exciting scene—the

¹ With the staff was Mr. Finley Anderson, correspondent of the New York *Herald*, afterward Lieutenant-Colonel and Assistant Adjutant-General of Hancock's Veteran Corps. Mr. Anderson's coolness and courage, on this occasion, were worthy of his subsequent position.

river, wreathed in the smoke of a hundred guns, the city beneath, torn by their bursting shells, the broad plain, and the heights beyond, bristling with intrenchments. Altogether unused to war, this genial recruit had no conception that, at such a distance, he could be in any danger, until suddenly the fire of a battery was turned upon the corps staff, close by. When three solid shot had struck the ground, throwing the mud ten feet into the air, and as many shrapnel had burst in front, sending their fast-spreading fan of bullets whistling over the bluff, a sense of the situation struck our new friend; and, with ludicrous precipitancy, he ensconced himself behind his drum, where, though the case would not have shed a pistol-shot, he cuddled up with an apparent feeling of relief and security, which, fortunately, was not disturbed by the impact of a three-inch ball.

It was fast growing dark, of a winter's evening, as Sully's brigade crossed into the town. No more of the Second Corps troops were sent over during the night; but, a second bridge having been laid lower down, Hawkins' brigade of the Ninth Corps was formed in the city. When morning came, Owen's and Sully's brigades from Howard, and Hawkins' from Willcox, were ordered to carry those portions of the town which at dusk had still been occupied by the enemy. When the advance was made, it was found that the Confederates had retired during the night, and the three brigades took position, partly within and partly without the city, to cover the crossing of the remaining troops.

During the night of the 11th, while the town was disputed between the two armies, and the bullets of the opposing skirmishers were whistling in every direction, advantage was taken of the situation by not a few lawless men to commit depredations; and even during the

early hours of the next day, while troops were being shifted from place to place, while the attention of the commanding officers and their staffs was necessarily given to matters of instant and vital concern, before time had been given to place guards and organize patrols, not a little plundering took place, and some downright, wicked mischief was perpetrated. There was in this nothing contrary to the laws of war; the town had refused a formal demand for its surrender; it had been carried by assault, with great loss; the contending forces had actually fought for possession, from street to street; so that, by the strict law governing such cases, the conquerors had the right to sack and pillage. At the same time, it would be pleasanter to remember Fredericksburg had nothing of the sort taken place. It goes almost without saying that all that was done, of real mischief, was done by a small number; and it is also true that much that was done came from a spirit of fun, rather than of hatred. Thus, the writer recollects seeing one gigantic private of the Irish Brigade wearing the white-satin bonnet of some fair "Secesh" bride; while another sported a huge "scoop" bonnet of the olden time. A coffee-pot that would hold ten gallons, and which had evidently done duty at church festivals, was the plunder of a third member of this rollicking band; another was staggering under a monstrous feather-bed for two, which he was carrying along, apparently in perfectly good faith, without a doubt that he should thereafter be enabled to sleep soft and warm during the remainder of his term of enlistment for "three years or the war;" while the Inspector-General of the corps, entering a noble house in the outskirts, which commanded a view of the enemy's line, found it occupied by the picket reserve, every man of whom had added to his uniform a lady's chemise

taken from the well-stored presses of this abode of luxury. But there were many things done which had not even the poor excuse of frolic. Pianos were thrown into the street, elegant furniture chopped up, family portraits spitted with bayonets, choice libraries scattered and mutilated, frescoed walls done over with the charcoal sketches of military amateurs.

We said, "as the day of the 12th wore on." How came it that in a movement, necessarily most costly of life, and highly critical in its character, the earliest hour of the morning was not seized to make up, as far as might be, for the loss of the 11th? Surely if anything was to be done, in the face of a powerful and intrenched army, it should be undertaken at once; and that this might be, every detail of the plan should have been carefully studied before the crossing, the result reduced to writing in a form so precise and clear as to be literally incapable of misconstruction or misapprehension. As a matter of fact, General Burnside had no plan of operations whatsoever when he crossed the river; and all through the day of the 12th, and even through the following night, he was vacillating in purpose. At one time he contemplated the transfer of the Right Grand Division, first, across Hazel Run, a small stream emptying into the Rappahannock, and then across Deep Run, a somewhat more important tributary which separated the two wings of the army. The effect of this would have been to bring his whole force into the position intended for Franklin, and to fight a single battle against the enemy's right. This was undoubtedly the wisest course to be pursued, if anything whatever was to follow this ill-considered and ill-omened crossing of the river in the direct front of Lee's army. On receipt of this intimation from general headquarters, orders were sent out for the construction

of the necessary bridges to effect the transfer, and a thorough reconnoissance of the position was made by the Inspector-General of the corps, Captain Morgan.

During the day General Couch sent his Assistant Adjutant-General, Major Walker, to the headquarters of General Sumner, to make a report of his observations and views. As the conversation which took place at this interview throws light upon the operations of the following day, its general purport is given. General Hooker and General Burnside were both with General Sumner. The subject of discussion between these officers was the distribution of the horse-artillery of the army between the several columns of pursuit. On reporting to General Sumner, Major Walker was told to report directly to the commander-in-chief. He therefore proceeded to say to General Burnside that General Couch wished him to say that he, General Couch, was confident that the enemy meant to make their stand upon the hills in rear of the town, to which the reply came from General Sumner, "Oh, it is just possible!" The tone in which this was said showed clearly that General Burnside had inspired at least the commander of the Right Grand Division with his own sanguine belief that the enemy were to slink away at the sight of his splendid army, and that the immediate problem was not how to win a battle, but how to make the most of Lee's retreat. We shall see the influence of this belief on the orders issued for the next day.

Again, Major Walker said that General Couch had instructed him to say that, while not in possession of the ground, he was confident from the statements made by Confederate deserters, contrabands and citizens, that a deep trench or canal ran around Fredericksburg in the rear, which would prove a serious obstacle to the passage

of troops debouching from the town to assault the works on the hills behind. To this General Burnside replied with something like asperity.¹ He declared that he himself had occupied Fredericksburg with the Ninth Corps the August before; that his troops had been pushed far out upon the hills; that he had ridden all over the plain, and that he was confident no such obstacle existed. "Say to General Couch," he concluded, earnestly, "that he is mistaken." When we come to tell the story of the battle of the morrow, we shall have to speak again of this fatal trench.

The remaining hours of the 12th wore away, General Burnside not being able to decide between the different plans suggesting themselves to his mind, hoping against hope that some sign of the enemy's retreat would relieve him from the painful uncertainty. But Lee had no thought of retreating. He had watched the crossing of our troops with a stern delight. What, indeed, could he ask more, than that the Army of the Potomac should precipitate itself against his position, strong by nature, rendered doubly strong by fortifications, crowded with artillery, and held by seventy thousand veterans? Even during the night Burnside passed the time in doubt and bewilderment, his confidence in the enemy's retreat rudely shaken by their unbroken front, painfully impressed by

¹ General John R. Brooke, U.S.A., recently told the writer that Colonel, afterward General, Zook, returning from the conference of officers held before the crossing, informed him that at the council Colonel Christ, commanding a brigade of the Ninth Corps, stated to General Burnside that such a canal existed; that upon this General Burnside grew very angry, declaring that it was not the first time Colonel Christ had undertaken to thwart his plans. This, perhaps, explains the feeling indicated by General Burnside on receiving Couch's communication on the same point.

the responsibility of deciding where and how his own gallant and well-appointed troops should be brought into action. At last, the commanding general, abandoning the scheme of drawing the Right Grand Division across Hazel and Deep Runs, to reinforce Franklin's column, determined to do something at each end of the line. Exactly, or even approximately, what that something was, as it stood in his mind, it is hopeless to conjecture. The orders issued to Franklin have formed the subject of an extended controversy, into which we need not enter. The orders issued to Sumner alone concern the history of the Second Corps. They are so strange that I give them here at length. The attempt to execute these orders cost the right column between eight and nine thousand men.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
December 13, 1862, 6 A.M.

MAJOR-GENERAL E. V. SUMNER,

Commanding Right Grand Division, Army of the Potomac.

The General Commanding directs that you extend the left of your command to Deep Run, connecting with General Franklin, extending your right as far as your judgment may dictate. He also directs that you push a column of a division or more along the plank and telegraph roads, with a view to seizing the heights in the rear of the town. The latter movement should be well covered with skirmishers, and supported, so as to keep its line of retreat well open. Copy of instructions given to General Franklin will be sent to you very soon. You will please await them at your present headquarters, where he (the General Commanding) will meet you. Great care should be taken to prevent a collision of our own forces during the fog. The watchword for the day will be "Scott." The column for a movement up the telegraph and plank roads will be got in readiness to move, but will not move till the General Commanding communicates with you.

I have the honor to be, General, very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN G. PARKE,
Chief of Staff.

This order was transmitted to General Couch in the following terms :

HEADQUARTERS, RIGHT GRAND DIVISION,
NEAR FALMOUTH, VA.,

December 13, 1862.

MAJOR-GENERAL COUCH,

Commanding Second Corps d'Armée.

GENERAL : The Major-General Commanding directs me to say to you that General Willcox has been ordered to extend to the left, so as to connect with Franklin's right. You will extend your right so far as to prevent the possibility of the enemy occupying the upper part of the town. You will then form a column of a division for the purpose of pushing in the direction of the plank and the telegraph roads, for the purpose of seizing the heights in rear of the town. This column will advance in three lines, with such intervals as you may judge proper, this movement to be covered by a heavy line of skirmishers in front and on both flanks. You will hold another division in readiness to advance in support of this movement, to be formed in the same manner as the leading division. Particular care and precaution must be taken to prevent collision with our own troops in the fog. The movement will not commence until you receive orders. The watchword will be "Scott."

Very respectfully, your most obedient servant,

J. H. TAYLOR,

Chief of Staff, Assistant Adjutant-General.

P.S.—The Major-General Commanding thinks that, as Howard's division led into the town, it is proper that one of the others take the advance.

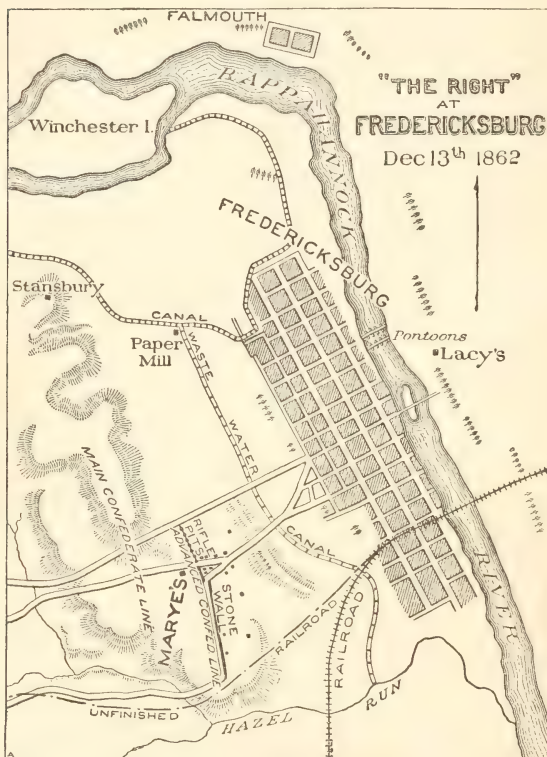
J. H. T.

A column of a division or more (Burnside); a division with another division in readiness to support it (Sumner)! Will posterity believe that such a battle was fought on such orders? Nine divisions had been assigned to constitute the right column: three of the Second Corps, two of the Ninth, three of the Fifth, and one of the Third. Yet out of this column one division was to be formed in order of battle, with another in sup-

port. No orders were issued for the co-operation of the Ninth Corps; the Fifth Corps was not even across the river. Five thousand—at the most ten thousand—Union soldiers were to advance against a naturally strong position, thoroughly intrenched, and held by Longstreet's entire corps of forty thousand men; and this position was not to be assaulted, it was merely to be "seized," a term that might have appropriately been used had the heights been held by skirmishers. Such as the order was, the commander of the Second Corps prepared to obey it, though knowing well that only some miracle could bring success. General French was ordered to form his division, the Third, in a deployed column of brigades, with intervals of two hundred yards.¹ General Hancock's division, the First, was assigned to the support of French. General Howard's division, the Second, was to hold the right of the town against the possible initiative of the enemy. These dispositions made, General Couch awaited the order to advance. At about half-past eleven it came, and at exactly twelve o'clock French's skirmishers were driving in the Confederate pickets, and his division, in the order of battle prescribed, was moving out of the town. The view was one that might have daunted the Old Guard of Napoleon. The plain intervening between Fredericksburg and the ridge occupied by the Confederates is from seven to eight hundred yards wide at the point selected for the attack, which was to be against the southernmost of the three hills into which that ridge is divided. Upon this plain the Union column debouched by two roads severally known as the plank and the telegraph road. Of these the plank road is the old county road which,

¹ The intervals actually taken are reported by the brigade commanders as one hundred and fifty yards.

after crossing the river, runs through the town, passes over the plain westward, and runs out, through Chancel-



lorsville, toward Orange Court House, destined to be crossed many and many a time by the Army of the Po-

tomac in its future movements, and to figure largely in all accounts of Chancellorsville, Mine Run, and the Wilderness. The telegraph road lies to the south of the plank road, traversing the plain between the town and the hills in a direction nearly parallel; but as it reaches the hills, it turns to the left and runs along their foot until an old railroad cut is reached, when it turns westward and runs through the same depression in the ground as the projected railroad, leaving there the field of the approaching battle. I have said that the telegraph road turned to the south on reaching the foot of the hills. In fact, however, the road forks one hundred and fifty yards from that point; and while the proper telegraph road skirts the base of the hills as stated, a branch runs straight on up the ridge, which it crosses near the house of Mr. Marye, which gives its name to this portion of the general line of hills beyond Fredericksburg. The ridge here is not of great elevation, but a very moderate hill, with terraced sides toward the town, and is itself dominated by an elevated plateau on the west and southwest. The telegraph road, as it skirts the base of the hills running southward (and thus parallel to the general course of the river and to the length of the town), is for a considerable distance sunken below the level of the ground, and is, on the side toward the town, bordered by a substantial stone wall, shoulder high. Behind this admirable cover, at this moment, were stationed the Eighteenth Georgia on the right; next, the Twenty-fourth Georgia; next, Phillips' Georgia Legion, all of Cobb's Confederate brigade; and on the left, the Twenty-fourth North Carolina, of Robert Ransom's brigade. The crest of the hill to right and left was occupied by batteries and compact lines of infantry, with heavy columns in support. At Marye's Heights the formation of the

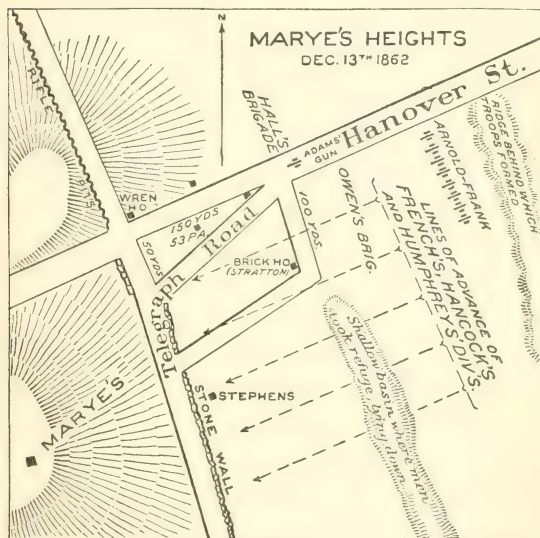
ground allowed the enemy to shoot clear over the heads¹ of the troops in the road at the foot of the hill, while the configuration of the ground allowed the concentration of a powerful artillery upon the head of a Union column debouching from the town. Indeed, the expression is attributed to Colonel Alexander, Longstreet's chief of artillery, that he could rake the whole plain between the hills and the town as with a fine-tooth comb.

Such was the position, as it could have been discerned by the eye, or studied through a field-glass, on any clear day between the 17th of November, when the head of the Second Corps first came in sight of Fredericksburg, and the 13th of December, when the same corps was ordered to scale those bristling heights. But it was only as the dashing brigade of Kimball emerged from the town, following its own rattling skirmishers, at noon of the great day, that one of the most formidable obstacles which it had to encounter came in view. From the western edge of the town the ground fell slightly and gradually away to a canal,² about fifteen feet wide and from four to six feet deep, which ran clear around Fredericksburg in the rear. It was this trench of which General Couch had, the day before, warned General Burnside. This was the obstacle the existence of which

¹ Thus, Lieutenant-Colonel Bland, commanding the Seventh South Carolina Regiment, says: "About seventy yards below and in front of us was the telegraph road, with a stone wall or fence, on the enemy's side, behind which rested three regiments of Cobb's brigade and the Second and Eighth South Carolina, the latter two having just reinforced them. The knoll in my front rendered it impossible for us to injure our friends, but placed us in fine range of the enemy. We would load and advance to fire, then drop back to reload."

² For carrying the waste water from the canal supplying the mills on the northern edge of the city.

Burnside had denied, alleging his personal acquaintance with the topography of Fredericksburg. Had the commanding general on the 12th decided to make the assault he actually delivered on the 13th, and directed a reconnoissance to be made, the Confederate skirmishers



might have been driven in, and the eastern edge of the plain have been held, at the cost of two or three hundred men; the nature and extent of this obstacle would have been determined, and preparations for effecting a rapid crossing could have been made during the night. As it was, this trench, wide and deep enough to constitute a most serious obstacle, was first discovered by the head of

the column as it was advancing to the attack under fire. Its presence required that our troops should continue to move by the flank, by fours, to within six hundred yards of the enemy's works. In a situation so distressing it was fortunate that the ground rose beyond the canal sufficiently to afford a fair cover against musketry. Here a column, shattered in its movement by the flank from the edge of the town across the bridges, might reform for its final charge against the enemy's works. The canal was perhaps two hundred yards from the outermost street of the city; the low friendly ridge just described was perhaps one hundred and fifty yards beyond; from this ridge to the stone wall and the sunken road was perhaps four hundred yards. The space was here and there crossed by lines of post-and-board fence.

French's division had, as stated, formed for the assault in three deployed lines, with brigade front. The leading brigade was that of Kimball, which we saw fighting with such vivacity at Antietam. In the interval it had been reinforced by the addition of the Fourth Ohio and the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-eighth New Jersey. Appreciating the importance of a quick and vigorous advance, General Kimball threw out a very strong skirmish line, composed of the two dashing Ohio regiments, under command of Colonel John S. Mason, of the Fourth, strengthened by the First Delaware, Major Thomas A. Smyth, which had been sent over from the Third Brigade. The Eighth moved out Hanover Street, crossed the bridge upon the string-pieces, and deployed to the left; the Fourth, with the First Delaware, moved out Princess Ann Street, crossed the canal near the railroad depot, and deployed to the right. The skirmishers then made close connection, and pushed forward with a vigor characteristic of those splendid regiments. The re-

mainder of the brigade, which had been formed in Caroline Street, moved out Princess Ann Street, crossed the open space near the railroad station under a terrific fire of artillery, passed over the canal, and, filing to the right, formed line of battle under cover of the ridge over which the skirmishers had already passed, driving the Confederate pickets rapidly forward toward the sunken road. The veteran regiments, the Seventh Virginia and the Fourteenth Indiana, held the right and the left respectively—the new regiments the centre.

And now, amid the redoubled roar of the artillery from the left bank of the Rappahannock, Kimball's brigade is seen to rise over the crest of the little ridge that had sheltered it in its formation. A hundred guns lash the enemy's batteries, to keep down their fire ; but the opportunity to plough the ranks of the advancing brigade keeps all the Confederate cannoneers steady at their pieces throughout the storm of shot ; and, from the wide circuit of the hills, every gun that can be brought to bear is turned upon Kimball's line ; while, at easy range, from behind the stone wall, the enemy's riflemen pick off the leading officers as coolly as if at a turkey-shoot. Rapidly our ranks are thinned ; yet Kimball's men push on without discharging a gun until within perhaps a hundred and twenty-five yards of the stone wall, when they are fairly halted by the terrific weight of the musketry turned upon them ; at last they open fire, and lie down to await the arrival of reinforcements.¹ Some of the

¹ All the Confederate reports of Fredericksburg are affected by an error not unnatural on the part of commanding officers who were riding along the heights above the plain during the action, viz., that, on the repulse of the several successive charges, the troops engaged all broke to the rear and went back to cover. Thus, General McLaws, after paying a handsome tribute to the

skirmishers have forced their way up to within forty yards of the wall, and there they remain, living or dead. General Kimball has fallen, severely wounded ; Colonels Snyder, Seventh Virginia, and Wisewell, Twenty-eighth New Jersey, with Lieutenant-Colonel Godman, Fourth Ohio, are desperately wounded. Colonel John S. Mason assumes command. The brigade has spread somewhat from right to left in its advance, while its losses have caused great gaps between the regiments. And now (while the Twenty-seventh North Carolina is hurriedly thrown into the road, on the Confederate side) arrives French's Third Brigade, that at the head of which Max Weber fell at Antietam, now commanded by Colonel John W. Andrews, of the First Delaware, whose own regiment had participated in Kimball's attack. The experience of this brigade in crossing the plain, which is now fairly howling with shot and shell, and swept from end to end with rifle-balls, has been terrific. Colonel Andrews is disabled. Colonel McGregor, Fourth New York, has been wounded. Colonel Bendix, of the Tenth, was struck with shell before the brigade "rose" the crest,

gallantry with which Kimball's charge was made, says : " The survivors retreated, leaving their colors planted in their first position. Soon another column heavier than the first *advanced to the colors*, but were driven back with great slaughter. They were met on retiring by reinforcements and advanced again, but were again repulsed with increased loss." This account concerns the several charges of French's division from 12 to 1. It is only incorrect in assuming that the colors first planted were at any time deserted. The fact is, the hands of brave men rested on them from first to last. There was no time, from the moment Kimball's men first ranged themselves within a stone's throw of the fatal wall, that hundreds were not lying there in line of battle, their rifles tightly gripped, ready to repel a counter-charge of the enemy, or to join a fresh column in a new assault.

the command of his regiment devolving upon Captain Winchester, a gallant soldier, killed a few minutes later. The shattered regiments still push forward against a fire that grows every moment more deadly ; they close in to Kimball's support, but are at last driven back, retiring first to the cover of the ridge by the canal, withdrawing a little later into the city, where they are brought into line, in the second street from the water, under Lieutenant-Colonel Marshall.

In their advance over the crest and up against the stone wall, the Third Brigade has been closely followed by the Second, under the command of Colonel O. H. Palmer. It consists of Colonel Palmer's own regiment, the One Hundred and Eighth New York, the Fourteenth Connecticut, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Perkins, and the One Hundred and Thirtieth Pennsylvania, commanded by Colonel H. I. Zinn. This brigade pushes forward, with creditable zeal, to undertake a task which every officer and man can see for himself cannot be accomplished. Colonel Zinn falls dead ; Lieutenant-Colonel Perkins and Major Clark are wounded. The troops are first staggered, and then stayed. The moment they open fire it is evident that their initiative is gone ; some lie down, unwilling to leave the field, and await the arrival of Hancock, who is already forming for attack ; others are swept away by the enemy's fire, and carried back across the canal into the town.

French's assault is over. Perhaps twelve hundred of his men still cling to the field, lying prone on their faces at distances from three hundred to one hundred and twenty-five yards of the stone wall, the air around them humming with bullets, the dirt in front of them thrown up in little jets. And now a fresh stir is observed along the Confederate line, and the Forty-sixth North Caro-

lina rush over the crest and join the Twenty-seventh in the sunken road at the foot of the wall. The advance of French has, to a great extent, masked the fire of our artillery from the other side of the river, and now the field batteries are coming into action from the edge of the town. Arnold's fine Rhode Island battery is the first to support French. Dickinson's horse-battery, from the artillery reserve, is brought into action; and, later still, two other batteries of the reserve, to support the attack of the Second Corps. Sections are placed in each street of the city, ready to repel an attack should the enemy assume the initiative. But Couch had been ordered to attack Longstreet with one division, supporting it with another. What of that other? Where is Hancock? Will he suffer the remains of French's division to be run over by the enemy emerging from behind the stone wall, or murdered one by one as they lie prone upon the ground in front of that line of death? Not if it is the same Hancock we saw at Williamsburg.

Hardly has French left him room to move, when the dashing commander of the First Division forms his column. Hardly has French crossed the bridges over the canal, when Hancock is at his heels. Hardly has French's last brigade risen above the crest of the sheltering ridge, when Hancock's leading brigade takes its place and awaits the order to charge. It is the brigade of Zook; and, oh! no man of all the thousands who from either side watched its advance, when at last the word came, will ever forget that peerless example of valor and discipline. Over the crest they swept—Brooke, with his renowned Fifty-third Pennsylvania; Bailey, with the Second Delaware; Paul Frank, with the Fifty-second New York; the Fifty-seventh, Major Throop; the Sixty-sixth, Captain Wehle; and Bostwick, with the Twenty-

seventh Connecticut, which only joined four days ago. Brooke, in addition to leading his own regiment, is instructed to look out for the Twenty-seventh. Forward, as steadily as when on parade in the old Camp California, this magnificent brigade moved to its hopeless task. As it advanced over the field covered with corpses, many of the men of French's division rose and joined the charge, taking the place of those who at every instant fell out of the line from the murderous fire of the enemy. Soon, though with one-third of its members shot down, it comes upon the plucky men of Kimball's brigade, who have so long been awaiting not relief, but support. With a shout these gallant fellows rise, as the dead might be conceived to rise, out of the very earth, and swell the ranks of Zook.¹ Will they succeed? Success, indeed, in any true sense is impossible; for even should they mount the stone wall, now less than a hundred yards away, bayonet its defenders, and press up the slope of Marye's Hill a thousand or two strong, what could become of them except to be surrounded and captured, or destroyed entire by the dense masses of Longstreet which lie in reserve behind the crest? But will they reach the stone wall? It seems for the moment as if

¹ This I understand to be the moment to which the Confederate General R. Ransom, Jr., commanding division, refers in his official report, as follows: "The enemy now seemed determined to reach our position, and formed apparently a triple line. Observing this movement on their part, I brought up the three regiments of my brigade to within one hundred yards of the crest of the hills, and pushed the Twenty-fifth North Carolina to the crest. The enemy, almost massed, moved to the charge heroically, and met the withering fire of our artillery and small arms with wonderful stanchness. On they came to within less than one hundred and fifty yards of our line, but nothing could live before the sheet of lead that was hurled at them from this distance."

they would. The Twenty-fifth North Carolina rushes down the hill and joins its comrade, the Twenty-fourth, in the road,¹ while two regiments of Kershaw's brigade, the Second and Eighth South Carolina, are also thrown behind the stone wall. The new-comers find the line complete, compact, two ranks deep; there is no place for them except by doubling on the troops already there, and this is accordingly done, the fire from the stone wall hereafter coming from four ranks² loading and discharging as fast as men can, and that at a mark distant only a stone's throw. At this crisis, too, the Sixteenth Georgia appears to reinforce its comrades of Cobb's brigade, commanded by Colonel McMillan, for Cobb has been killed, and the fusillade from the stone wall and sunken road is now sustained by ten regiments,³ while from the crest above the remaining regiments of Kershaw's, Cooke's, and Ransom's brigades pour down a fire all the more deadly because the men load and discharge their

¹ "The Twenty-fifth North Carolina Volunteers reached the crest of the hill just in time to pour into the enemy a few volleys, at most deadly range, and then took position, shoulder to shoulder, with Cobb's and Cooke's men in the road." Report of Brigadier-General R. Ransom, Jr., commanding division.

² "I found on my arrival that Cobb's brigade, Colonel McMillan, commanding, occupied my entire front, and my troops could only get into position by doubling on them. This was accordingly done, and the formation, along most of the line, during the engagement, was consequently four deep. As an evidence of the coolness of the command, I may mention here that, notwithstanding their fire was the most rapid and continuous I have ever witnessed, not a man was injured by the fire of his comrades." Kershaw's report.

³ The Sixteenth, Eighteenth, Twenty-fourth Georgia, and Phillips' Georgia Legion; the Twenty-fourth, Twenty-fifth, Twenty-seventh, and Forty-sixth North Carolina; the Second and Eighth South Carolina.

pieces with a confidence and coolness which could only have been imparted by the presence of an advanced line. The sole compensation to the charging column is found in the fact that our troops are now so close that the Confederate artillery on the right can no longer enfilade their lines. Against this blazing musketry, tier on tier, Zook's men bend themselves as men who breast a furious gale of wind. But hark, what cheer is that which bursts from the rear as they struggle on? It is the Irish Brigade, which Hancock has thrown forward to give a fresh impulse to the waning assault. Here are the three sterling New York regiments—the Sixty-ninth, under Nugent, the Eighty-eighth, under Patrick Kelly, and the Sixty-third, to-day under Major O'Neill; with them comes the Twenty-eighth Massachusetts, under Byrnes, and another new comrade, the One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania, which joined at Bolivar Heights, under Dennis Heenan. Right gallantly the Irishmen charge over the sheltering ridge, and dash across the bloody spaces strewn with the dead and dying of the brigades that have gone on before. They come up not a moment too soon. Zook's brigade has struggled forward to the last of the fences¹ which cross the field of battle.

This fence our gallant fellows try, here to bear down by main force, there to wrench from the ground. But how can men live where, a pistol-shot away, four ranks of veteran marksmen, themselves completely sheltered, are pouring forth an unremitting blast of deadly fire? The killed and wounded fall like leaves in autumn, while hundreds of men, brave among the bravest, lie down beneath the storm of lead. Nugent and Kelly, to whom the Irish

¹ "Each of these fences destroyed the unity of at least one brigade." Hancock's official report.

Brigade has been accustomed to look for examples of courage and devotion, are at the front ; with their own hands they undertake to tear down the fences and make a way to the stone wall. But it is in vain ; of twelve hundred men, five hundred have fallen. Nugent, of the Sixty-ninth, is down, fifteen of his commissioned officers with him—only three remain. O'Neill, of the Sixty-third, is disabled, with six of his officers. Heenan, who has led his new regiment as far as any, is wounded, with eleven of his officers. The fourth commander is now in charge of the battalion. Flesh and blood will not stand it longer. In the face of the manifest impossibility of accomplishing anything, a part of the brigade take to the ground ; a part break to the rear, are reformed by Meagher, who, in his strange, unaccountable way, has been separated from his command during its charge—and at last find their way into the city, and even across the river.

Only one brigade remains. Riding freely over the field, with his dashing staff, Hancock has watched every phase of the fight, and now orders up Caldwell for one last effort. And, surely, if any brigade can carry the stone wall, it is that which now rises over the crest. The Fifth New Hampshire holds the right under Cross, who is to-day to surpass his own brilliant reputation for furious courage and reckless exposure, but is not to die till Gettysburg ; next him, with the Eighty-first Pennsylvania, is Henry Boyd McKeen, who on this field is to win fresh glory, but reserves his life for Cold Harbor ; in the centre is Van Schack, with the German Seventh New York ; farther on, the new regiment of the brigade, the One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania, under Brown ; and on the left of the line, the consolidated Sixty-first and Sixty-fourth New York, under Miles. Why repeat the story of an advance over a field swept by artillery

and musketry, while brave men fall by hundreds, only to reach a barrier which vomits death like some fabled monster of antiquity? Of the nineteen hundred and eighty-seven men with which this brigade rose over the crest, nine hundred and ninety-four, including sixty-two officers, are killed or wounded in this gallant but hopeless advance. Caldwell's men gain the farthest point to which any of our troops have advanced; a few of them, joined by some choice spirits of Kimball, Zook, and Meagher, actually push their way through the few gaps that have been torn by dying hands in the last fence, and, a mere handful, struggle on to take the stone wall held by its four ranks of defenders.

When the dead of that bloody field were buried, all the way from the last fence, which no regiment or company ever passed in line, up to within twenty and even fifteen yards of the stone wall, lay soldiers of those four brigades. Oh, that such valor had been well employed! Oh, that such precious blood had been wisely spent! Oh, that those heroic regiments had, in the course of some prudently conceived movement, been let loose upon the Confederate flank!

Yet even here, among these forlorn conditions, one heart there was as fresh, as bouyant, as that of a child at play. It beats in the youthful form of Miles, a born soldier, rightly named. Mitchell, of Hancock's staff, directs him to move toward the position which the heroic Brooke,¹ with some of the stoutest souls of the Fifty-third Pennsylvania, has seized and is still holding, hardly forty yards from the stone wall, around a little cluster of houses on either side of the road just as it is about to rise up

¹ Colonel Brooke had sent the Twenty-seventh Connecticut off the field, on account of the utter inefficiency of the wretched Belgian rifles which this regiment carried.

Marye's Heights. From this point, whence a biscuit can be tossed into the sunken road, Brooke's handful of brave men have maintained an incessant fusillade upon the enemy to keep down the fire of their infantry and to pick off the gunners of the pieces which look down the road. Miles' two regiments are on the left of Caldwell's line; but without a tremor they are marched right oblique, with arms at "right shoulder," the whole width of the field. They cross the telegraph road just below the forks, and come to a front, their left resting on the road. A ball strikes Miles in the throat; but with his hand against the wound, and the blood streaming out through his fingers, this prince of fighters dashes back to Couch, who, close at hand, is watching with breaking heart the annihilation of his splendid corps, and entreats permission to lead a new charge. But the situation is hopeless—the enemy's line of fire has been growing longer and longer, as their fresh troops are hurried to the point of danger; new regiments have been crowded into the sunken road till it can hold no more; their reserves are known to be in dense masses behind the crest. Franklin's attack upon the left has already failed. Couch's mind is turned to the danger of a counter attack by the victorious enemy upon the few thousands of his troops who are crouching on the ground in front of the stone wall, or have been rallied in their flight behind the low, sheltering crest beyond the canal. Fortunately, Willcox, with his two divisions of the Ninth Corps, has well executed his orders to support Couch on the left, and has pushed his troops close up to the front, engaging Hood with vigor, and now keeps the enemy's attention fully occupied on that side. But on the right there is pressing need of support; and urgent representations come from French and Hancock as to the perilous positions of their commands.

Couch had, from the first, desired to attack, if he were to attack at all, well to the right. In the council of war he had opposed the crossing in front ; and, after that was effected, he had represented to General Sumner that the heights in rear of the town should be attempted, if at all, not by a movement out the telegraph and plank roads, but by columns issuing from the right of the town. In this he had been overruled. When ordered, however, to attack Marye's Heights, out the telegraph and plank roads, with one division, supporting it with another, but at the same time to extend his right so far as to prevent the possibility of the enemy occupying the upper part of Fredericksburg, Couch had kept Howard's division in hand (Whipple's division of the Third Corps having taken the place of that division in the town), not only to execute the last part of this order, but in the expectation that the course of the action would call for an attack by that division in the very quarter where he believed the main attack should have been made. As early as 1.45 P.M., Couch sent a despatch by the signal officers, urging an attack upon the right, concluding with these words : " It is only murder now." But no attention was paid to these representations ; and a little after two o'clock, Couch ordered Howard in upon the telegraph road. The leading brigade was that of Colonel Owen, to which the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Pennsylvania had been temporarily assigned to replace the Seventy-first Pennsylvania, which was on picket.

The Pennsylvanians crossed the bridge over the canal, moving out the telegraph road, by the flank, left in front. Reaching a ploughed field on the left of the road, they deployed in handsome style and moved forward in line of battle to the vicinity of the Brick House, where the troops were halted and ordered to lie down. Hall's

brigade, meanwhile, followed Owen, by the flank ; and Couch, for the moment, resolved to lead it in person up the street, to see if it were not possible, with the corps commander at its head, to gain the crest of the hill. The column was formed, but the "sober second-thought" prevailed, and Hall was ordered to deploy on the right of the road. This he did, and promptly moved his regiments forward against the rifle-pits which prolonged the stone wall on that side of the road. "The Twentieth Massachusetts showed the matchless courage and discipline evinced on the previous day" (Hall), standing up to its work, even when its hardy companions gave way under the tremendous fire which greeted them. Hall again formed the brigade and attempted another attack. The Nineteenth Massachusetts gained an advanced position along the road, which it held till dark, losing two commanders and many other officers and men ; but the attack failed. Hall then caused his men to lie down, and open a brisk fire to keep the enemy's heads below their intrenchments. Sully's (First) brigade meanwhile had come up and formed in rear of Hall, well sheltered by the care of General Sully, one of the most judicious of commanders as well as one of the best of fighters. The First Minnesota was sent to support a battery farther to the right, while the Nineteenth Maine, for the first time under fire, held the extreme right of the Union line, near a mill on the canal. About this time another of Sully's regiments, the Fifteenth Massachusetts, which had just been relieved by a regiment of Whipple's in the city, moved out the telegraph road and joined Owen on the left.

But Couch's anxiety regarding a counter charge is not wholly relieved by Howard's appearance on the immediate field of action ; moreover, the enemy are now, after

the repulse of the Second Corps, pounding the Ninth Corps, upon the left, with a terribly destructive fire, and Couch feels it imperative for him to relieve the pressure on Willcox ; he thinks he sees the way, and resolves upon a feat of arms which, so far as the writer is informed, had never been before attempted in all the desperate fighting of the war. To the consternation of his chief of artillery, he orders a battery to be thrown forward from the town across the mill-race, to take position above the crest.¹ "My God ! general," exclaims Morgan, "you will lose your guns." "I would rather lose my guns than lose my men," is the reply. "Put them in !" The battery is Hazard's A, First Rhode Island. Without a murmur, Hazard dashes with his twelve-pounders into the street, over the bridge, and comes into action on the left of the road, opening fire with a rapidity which well serves the general's purpose, at once to hearten the men lying down in front and to create in the mind of the enemy the expectation of a new assault, which would keep them from taking the initiative, and would relieve the pressure on the Ninth Corps. The right piece of Hazard's battery, under Lieutenant Adams, a cool and capable officer, is pushed still further up the road, half way to the stone wall. Adams' horses are shot down almost as soon as the piece is unlimbered ; the little guidon stuck in the trunnion is carried away, but instantly replaced ; three "number ones" are struck down, in quick succession, at the muzzle of the gun ; but still the piece is served, in that perilous place,

¹ General Hooker, in his testimony before the committee of the conduct of the war, speaks as if he himself ordered this movement. He did, indeed, direct Frank's battery to be sent in to support Hazard, but the sending forward of Hazard was without any suggestion from him.

as steadily as if it were firing blank cartridges at a review. A little later Frank's battery (G, of the First New York) is thrown forward to the ridge, and worthily supports Hazard on his left. Never before, I believe, and never afterward in the war, was artillery so far advanced, in plain sight, without cover, against an intrenched enemy. The object of the daring enterprise was accomplished, and the guns were ultimately withdrawn without the loss of a single piece.

All that the Second Corps could do was now done. It had obeyed its instructions to attack a strong position, thoroughly fortified, bristling with eighty guns, and held by forty thousand infantry. From the moment that Mason's skirmishers drove in the Confederate pickets, to the last effort of Hall's brigade, between the telegraph and the plank roads, all that had been done had been done without the slightest help from that inspiration which springs from the anticipation of victory. Every officer and every soldier in the ranks had seen and felt for himself that the attempt to carry the position was hopeless. Yet nearly four thousand men had fallen in obedience to orders, while the Ninth Corps had bravely, though at smaller loss, supported the attack. Well might General Burnside say: "Never did men fight more persistently than this brave Grand Division of Sumner. The officers and men seemed to be inspired with the lofty courage and determined spirit of their noble commander."

The troops of Hooker were now coming upon the field. The commander of the Centre Grand Division had seen one-third of his command, two divisions of the Third Corps, sent to reinforce Franklin. Whipple's division of that corps had, during the morning of the great day, been moved into the city, and, as already stated, had there relieved Howard's division. At or about 1.30 P.M. Gen-

eral Hooker had received orders to throw Butterfield's Fifth Corps into the city, and reinforce the attack of Sumner. Having gone upon the field of battle about two o'clock, and fully satisfied himself, after consultation with Couch, that the enterprise on the right was foredoomed to failure, from the strength of the Confederate position, General Hooker, having already despatched Griffin's division to the support of Sturgis, now hard pressed by Hood, sent a message earnestly representing the uselessness of the sacrifice. Such a message, from an officer so desperately daring in attack, should have been enough; but Burnside, after his long and painful vacillation, had passed into a state of hopeless obstinacy, and peremptorily ordered the attack to go forward. So much like sheer murder did this appear, that Hooker even brought himself to ride across the river, while Butterfield's divisions were coming up, and personally urge on the commander-in-chief the abandonment of the project. All was in vain; Burnside merely reiterated that the attack must be, should be, made.

When Hooker, returning from his futile errand, was forming Humphreys' division in column for the assault, with Sykes in support upon the right, Couch renewed to that officer his recommendation that the movement should be made far out to the right. To this suggestion Hooker, in terribly bad temper, as was not unnatural, replied contemptuously and insolently. Stung by the insult, broken-hearted at the defeat of his corps and the massacre of his gallant soldiers, and perhaps shrinking from the spectacle of a fresh slaughter, Couch turned abruptly away and dashed up the road. Passing Hazard's battery on his left, he rode slowly up to Adams' gun, which was still being served in the road, and exchanged a few words with that officer; then putting

spurs to his horse, he proceeded to the point where Brooke, with his companions, partially sheltered behind the group of buildings, still held the extreme advance. Sitting here, on horseback, at easy pistol-range from the enemy's line, Couch surveyed the field from right to left, conversed a moment with Brooke, who begged and prayed him to retire, and then turning to the left, rode *down the line of his corps!* A strange review it is surely! There, prone on the ground, the living mingled with the dead, are three or four thousand men, the remains of twenty regiments. The line zigzags as the fortunes of the several charges have left it, at some points fifty, at others one hundred or two hundred, yards from the stone wall. Except for those who cluster for shelter at the rear of the few huts or houses on the line, not a man is erect. With rifle or sword tightly clutched, the private and the colonel alike lie hugging the ground; while now and then strange shelter is found. Here is a horse of the staff, which has fallen near the point of the farthest advance; it lies with its back to the enemy, and between its legs is a very nest of men, who press their heads against its belly. Here two or three stones have been dragged together to make a pile somewhat bigger than a hat; there a lifeless body serves as a partial cover for the living. The firing has almost ceased. Enough of our men are sheltered behind the brick house, the huts, and the blacksmith's shop, to make it hot for anyone who raises his head above the wall; the Confederates have been gorged with slaughter, or are awaiting the appearance of fresh columns of assault; the artillery fire is completely mastered, so far as the infantry is concerned, by the nearness of the two lines, though the batteries still pound each other, and the shells fly thickly over the plain. It is down such a line that Couch, with his three

companions,¹ rides, that winter afternoon, in his strange review.

And now Humphreys' Pennsylvania division of nine-months' regiments is forming beyond the mill-race,² with Sykes' division *en échelon* upon the right; and Colonel Mason, who has succeeded General Kimball, withdraws his shattered troops, which have been for two hours without ammunition, to the suburbs of the town, and subsequently forms them in one of the streets. A portion of Zook's brigade, which is out of ammunition, is marched down the road to the town.

Inasmuch as the report of General Humphreys, afterward the beloved commander of the Second Corps, standing almost peerless among the generals of the army in intrepidity, in moral force, and in the comprehension of military exigencies, contains matter to which I am bound to take exception, I give it here in his own words:

"The Second Brigade was quickly formed under my direction by Colonel Allabach, and then led by him and myself. It moved rapidly and gallantly up to General Couch's troops, under the artillery and musketry fire of the enemy. The nature of the enemy's line of defence could not be clearly perceived by me until I reached our

¹ In addition to an officer of his own staff, General Couch was accompanied by Lieutenant Alonzo H. Cushing, afterward killed at Gettysburg, then of General Sumner's staff, and a very brave and intelligent orderly named Long. General Couch afterward stated that he did not wish anyone to follow him, and was not aware until he reached Colonel Brooke's position that anyone had done so.

² About the time Humphreys' charge took place, Griffin's division of the Fifth Corps attacked the enemy farther to the left, where Willcox's Ninth Corps had been fighting. The attack was made with great gallantry and at very heavy loss.

line. The troops I was to support, as well as those on their left (I could not see those on their right from the interruption of the line by a road and the thick smoke), were sheltering themselves by lying on the ground. This example Colonel Allabach's brigade immediately followed, in spite of an effort to prevent it, and opened a fire upon the enemy. A part only of his men were able to reach the front rank, owing to the numbers already occupying the ground.

"The continued presence of the troops I was to support or relieve proved a serious obstacle to my success. As soon as I ascertained the nature of the enemy's position I was satisfied that our fire could have but little effect upon him, and that the only mode of attacking him successfully was with the bayonet. This I resolved to do, although my command was composed of troops that entered the service in August. With great difficulty their firing was arrested, chiefly by the exertions of myself and staff, and Colonel Allabach, aided by Colonel Allen, Colonel Clark, and Captain Tyler. While this was being done I sent a staff officer to General Tyler with instructions to bring his command to the left of the road in the ravine, and prepare it to support or take the place of Allabach's brigade, as the event might require. The charge was then made, but the deadly fire of musketry and artillery broke it, after an advance of fifty yards. Colonel Allabach re-formed the brigade, a portion in the line from which the charge was made, and the remainder in the ravine from which they originally advanced.

"The greater part of my staff were now on foot, having had their horses killed or disabled, my own being in the latter condition from two wounds. Mounting the horse of my special orderly (Dimond, Sixth United

States Cavalry) I rode to General Tyler's brigade to conduct it to the enemy, and while doing so received three successive orders from General Butterfield to charge the enemy's line, the last order being accompanied by the message that both General Burnside and General Hooker demanded that the crest should be taken before night. It was already growing dusky. General Tyler's brigade was not yet entirely formed, and was impeded in doing so by a battery of six guns, whose limbers occupied a part of his ground, and whose fire would have rendered it impossible for him to advance. With great difficulty I brought this battery to cease firing. Then riding along the two lines I directed them not to fire; that it was useless; that the bayonet alone was the weapon to fight with here. Anticipating, too, the serious obstacle they would meet with in the masses of men, lying under the little shelter afforded by the natural embankment in front before mentioned, who could not be got out of the way, I directed them to disregard these men entirely, and to pass over them. I ordered the officers to the front, and with a hurrah the brigade, led by General Tyler and myself, advanced gallantly over the ground, under the heaviest fire yet opened, which poured upon it from the moment it rose from the ravine.

"As the brigade reached the masses of men referred to, every effort was made by the latter to prevent our advance. They called to our men not to go forward, and some attempted to prevent by force their doing so. The effect upon my command was what I apprehended—the line was somewhat disordered, and in part forced to form into a column, but still advanced rapidly. The fire of the enemy's musketry and artillery, furious as it was before, now became still hotter. The stone wall

was a sheet of flame that enveloped the head and flanks of the column. Officers and men were falling rapidly, and the head of the column was at length brought to a stand when close up to the wall. Up to this time not a shot had been fired by the column, but now some firing began. It lasted but a minute, when, in spite of all our efforts, the column turned and began to retire slowly. I attempted to rally the brigade behind the natural embankment so often mentioned, but the united efforts of General Tyler, myself, our staffs, and the other officers, could not arrest the retiring mass. My efforts were the less effective, since I was again dismounted, my second horse having been killed under me. The only one of my staff now mounted was Lieutenant Humphreys, whose horse had been three times wounded. All the rest had their horses either killed or disabled, except one officer, who had been sent off with orders. Directing General Tyler to re-form his brigade under cover of the ravine, I returned to the portion of Allabach's brigade still holding, with the other troops, the line of natural embankment. At this moment some one brought me Colonel Elder's horse, the colonel having been dangerously wounded a short time before. My force being too small to try another charge, I communicated the result of the contest to General Butterfield, and received directions in return to bring the remainder of my troops to the ravine. This was accordingly done, the One Hundred and Twenty-third and One Hundred and Fifty-fifth Regiments, commanded by Colonels Clark and Allen, retiring slowly and in good order, singing and hurrahing. Colonel Allabach brought off the other regiments in equally good order. Our loss in both brigades was heavy, exceeding one thousand in killed and wounded, including in the number officers of high rank.

The greater part of the loss occurred during the brief time they were charging and retiring, which scarcely occupied more than ten or fifteen minutes for each brigade."

I have given General Humphreys' account of this charge in his own words; but I must add, that of all the features of that gallant enterprise, none was so conspicuous as General Humphreys' superb leadership. With such officers as Hooker, Couch, and Hancock on the field, it was difficult for any man to set an example of personal behavior which should be remarkable by comparison. And yet there was something in the way that studious, scholarly officer of engineers led his troops, especially the brigade of Tyler's, up against the stone wall, which filled all beholders with admiration. But while the efforts of Humphreys' men were most admirable, and the conduct of their leader was beyond all praise, the historian of the Second Corps cannot admit the censure which is implied in this account, and which was subsequently strongly expressed in a letter of General Humphreys, printed in the revised edition of "Swinton's Army of the Potomac." In that letter General Humphreys attributes his failure essentially to the confusion caused by his troops having to pass over the men of the Second Corps, and imputes blame that these men had not been withdrawn before his charge was ordered. Now it goes without saying that the presence of such a body of men, lying down, constitutes a certain obstacle to the progress of a fresh column; but it would have been as reasonable to quarrel with the corpses of French's and Hancock's men who had been killed in the charge, as with the bodies of their living companions who had clung to the ground, when the attack failed, deeming that it was their duty to hold what they had gained;

just as some of the same regiments did, eighteen months later, after the fatal charge at Cold Harbor. It is very likely true that among those thousands, a few may have called out to Allabach's and Tyler's men that it was useless to go forward ; but their own situation on that plain, swept by fire, is proof enough that such men were very few, if, indeed, the story is not the tale of some colonel or captain to excuse the breaking of his own command. The fact is, Humphreys' charge failed, not because of the presence of the remnants of the divisions that had made the previous assaults, but because, in General Humphreys' own words ; "the stone wall was a sheet of flame that enveloped the head and flanks of the column." Dense as was the line, four ranks deep, behind that wall, when Hancock's last attempt was made, it had just been freshly reinforced by the Fifteenth South Carolina, in support of the Second, while the Third was brought into the sunken road on the left of Phillips' Georgia legion, between the time of Allabach's charge and that of Tyler's.

Again, it cannot be admitted that this division approached "nearer to the wall than any other troops had reached." General Humphreys was not on the field when French's and Hancock's charges took place, he was not even on the same side of the river ; and therefore he could not know, from personal observation, what points were reached in those charges, while a hundred officers who witnessed both the earlier and the later assaults can testify that no troops went so near the stone wall that bloody day as the men of Kimball, Zook, Meagher, and Caldwell. But upon this point we are not called to rely upon the observations and recollections of men inflamed and excited by conflict. The dead of Fredericksburg were buried on the following Saturday by a de-

tachment under the command of Colonel John R. Brooke, who was accompanied by Captain Morgan, Inspector-General of the Second Corps. Both these officers have testified, in the most precise manner, that the bodies found nearest the stone wall were those of men of the Sixty-ninth New York, Fifth New Hampshire, and Fifty-third Pennsylvania. Evidence like this is beyond dispute. The writer regrets to be obliged to introduce controversial matters into this history; but the point is one respecting which it is a sacred duty to the dead not to keep silence.

The repulse of Humphreys virtually closed the battle of Fredericksburg. General Hooker having, as he bitterly expressed it, "lost as many men as his orders required," put a stop to the slaughter, and no other charge on the enemy's position was attempted. Firing occasionally broke out during the brief portion of the day which remained; and even after night fell, some alarm would start a fusillade in which thousands of muskets would be seen darting flame from their muzzles,¹ or would give rise to an artillery duel which would again shake the ground on which thousands of dead or wounded men were lying. At last all grew quiet, except for the groans of the

¹ The Confederate general, R. Ransom, Jr., who is somewhat afflicted with rhetoric, describes a charge made on his line after dark, as follows: "Just after dark, he (the enemy) opened a tremendous fire of small arms and at short range upon my whole line. This last desperate and murderous attack met the same fate which had befallen those which preceded, and his host were sent actually howling (!) back to their beaten comrades in the town." The fact is, no charge was made at this time—the firing being between General Ransom's people behind the stone wall and the Union troops lying in the position in which darkness found them.

stricken. Soon after dark General Couch was informed that his troops would be relieved by Sykes' division; but he declined to withdraw his corps except upon express orders from General Sumner. At eleven o'clock those orders came, and the "regulars" relieved the Second Corps, or nearly all of it, taking up positions considerably in rear of the line of the farthest advance of the afternoon. The several divisions of the Second Corps were drawn into the city or stationed on the outskirts toward the north and northwest. During the two days that followed, namely, the 14th and 15th, General Burnside remained shocked and bewildered at the disaster which had befallen his army, at one time telegraphing to Washington that though his assault had not been successful, he had gained ground and was holding it; at another time scheming to transfer all the troops to the left; at another time declaring that he would form a column of the Ninth Corps and lead it in person up Marye's Heights; at another time plunged in the deepest distress.

During the night of the 14th, Howard was directed to relieve a portion of General Sykes' division at the front; and for this purpose sent five regiments, under the command of Colonel George N. Morgan, First Minnesota. These regiments were all day subjected to a severe fire of artillery from the right, while the Confederate sharpshooters covered the whole space between our line and the city.

The losses of this detachment through the day were considerable. Arrangements had already been made for intrenching during the night, when, between eight and nine o'clock in the evening, orders were received to retire from the position. After holding the city and a portion of the plain through two days, in a vain endeavor to make

it out that the movement across the river was something other and something less than an utter and a hideous failure, General Burnside at last brought himself, on the night of the 15th, to withdraw his army to the left bank, excepting Butterfield's Fifth Corps, which remained for the time in Fredericksburg.

The losses had been monstrous, especially in the First, Second, and Fifth Corps. The following is the table of casualties:

| | Killed. | Wounded. | Missing. | Total. |
|-------------------|---------|----------|----------|--------|
| First Corps..... | 323 | 2,368 | 588 | 3,279 |
| Second Corps..... | 390 | 2,903 | 540 | 3,833 |
| Third Corps..... | 124 | 714 | 191 | 1,029 |
| Fifth Corps..... | 192 | 1,684 | 564 | 2,440 |
| Sixth Corps..... | 50 | 329 | 65 | 444 |
| Ninth Corps..... | 101 | 1,030 | 197 | 1,328 |
| Total | 1,180 | 9,028 | 2,145 | 12,353 |

NOTE.—The Confederate losses in killed and wounded for the period December 11th to 15th are given at 4,201, or only about 1 in 3 of the Union losses; but of the Confederate losses 2,682 occurred in Jackson's corps, in front of Franklin, where our troops had at least some chance, leaving but 1,519 as the losses of Longstreet's corps, on the Confederate left, opposite which fell three-fourths of the Union killed and wounded.

Inasmuch as General Lee only claims to have captured "more than nine hundred prisoners" (see his final report), it is evident that by far the greater portion of those returned as missing were either killed or wounded. In the Second and Fifth Corps, this was almost universally the rule, as neither of these corps was in a position where the enemy did or could secure prisoners. Probably not a man of the Second Corps was captured on the

13th. A few score may have been left behind in the retreat on the night of the 15th. More than half the loss of the Second Corps had fallen upon the division of Hancock. Taking in 5,006, it had lost 2,013, of whom not less than 156 were commissioned officers. While these figures are eloquent of valor and discipline, the heavy proportional loss of commissioned officers shows how truly and well the special trusts of honor and authority were discharged on that memorable day. Hancock's seventeen regiments went into action as sixteen battalions, the Sixty-first and Sixty-fourth New York being consolidated under the command of Miles. In these sixteen battalions twenty-five officers were killed or wounded while in command, some regiments having seen their second, their third, and even, in one case, their fourth commander struck down. The regiment which was headed by its fifth commander was the superb Fifth New Hampshire, destined to lead the roll of all the regiments of the Union Army in the number of its "killed in action." Its colonel, Cross, was here severely wounded, and its major, Edward E. Sturtevant, killed. Of the twenty-one other commissioned officers who went into fight fifteen fell, among them two while in command of the regiment. The Sixty-ninth New York, at whose head the heroic Nugent was severely wounded, was at last marched off under its fourth commander, sixteen officers out of nineteen having fallen. So, also, was the new but brave regiment of Heenan, the One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania; the veteran Eighty-first Pennsylvania, whose commander, McKen, bore himself, till severely wounded, with great gallantry and address; and the Sixty-sixth New York, whose lieutenant-colonel, J. H. Bull, had been killed in the crossing of the river, and whose senior captain, Ju-

lius Wehle, was killed early in the charge of Zook's brigade. Of the regiments which had their third commander on this day were the consolidated Sixty-first and Sixty-fourth New York; the Second Delaware, whose colonel, Bailey, fell with six of his officers; the Fifty-seventh New York, whose lieutenant-colonel, Chapman, had fallen in the crossing of the river, and whose major, Throop, was here mortally wounded, only two officers remaining with the regiment at the close of the action. The One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania had two commanders during the action, its efficient colonel, Brown, receiving several severe wounds; as, also, had the Sixty-third New York, whose major, O'Neill, was wounded. Among the commanding officers who entered the fight, yet brought out their regiments, were the chivalrous Brooke, of the Fifty-third Pennsylvania; Colonel George Van Schack, Seventh New York, who, though wounded, remained in command, having lost eighteen commissioned officers, one half of them killed or mortally wounded; Colonel Paul Frank, Fifty-second New York; Colonel Patrick Kelly, Eighty-eighth New York; Colonel Richard Byrnes, Twenty-eighth Massachusetts, which regiment, though strange to the corps, proved itself worthy of the brotherhood of the Irish Brigade; and Colonel Richard S. Bostwick, Twenty-seventh Connecticut, whose new nine months' regiment had borne itself worthily in the fight.

Among the other valuable officers who fell were, Major Horgan, of the Eighty-eighth New York, killed; Lieutenant-Colonel Mulholland, of the One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania; Major Carahar, of the Twenty-eighth Massachusetts; and Major Cavanagh, of the Sixty-ninth New York, wounded. The total losses of the regiments of this division, in comparison with the

strength with which they went into action, were as follows:

| Brigade. | Regiment. | Took into action. | Lost. |
|----------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-------|
| Caldwell's ... | 61st and 64th New York. | 435 | 108 |
| | 145th Pennsylvania. | 500 | 229 |
| | 5th New Hampshire. | 303 | 193 |
| | 81st Pennsylvania. | 261 | 176 |
| | 7th New York. | 488 | 243 |
| Meagher's ... | 69th New York. | 238 | 128 |
| | 88th New York. | 252 | 127 |
| | 63d New York. | 162 | 44 |
| | 28th Massachusetts. | 416 | 158 |
| | 116th Pennsylvania. | 247 | 88 |
| Zook's | 57th New York. | 192 | 87 |
| | 53d Pennsylvania. | 314 | 155 |
| | 2d Delaware. | 244 | 54 |
| | 52d New York. | 160 | 43 |
| | 66th New York. | 238 | 75 |
| | 27th Connecticut. | 384 | 113 |

The division staff shared in the losses of the day. Three, Miller, Parker, and Rorty were wounded; four had horses shot under them. General Caldwell was slightly wounded, and two of his staff were wounded.

General French's division, which had opened the attack, stood next to Hancock's on the bloody score. Its losses were 89 killed, 904 wounded, 167 missing; total 1,160. Kimball's brigade lost 520; Palmer's, 291; Andrews', 342. The new regiments suffered severely, the Twenty-eighth New Jersey losing 193, the Twenty-fourth 136. The Fourteenth Connecticut, which had been engaged at Antietam, here lost 120; the One Hundred and Thirtieth and One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania, likewise Antietam regiments, lost respectively 107 and 79. The First Delaware lost 93, the One Hundred and Eighth New York 92, the Fourteenth Indiana 75, the Fourth New York 74, the Tenth New York 68. Among the officers of rank who had fallen were General Nathan Kimball, Colonels Zinn

(killed), Bendix, McGregor, Andrews, Snyder, and Wisewell, Lieutenant-Colonels Godman and Perkins, and Major Clark.

The losses of Howard's division, which at the beginning of the action of the 13th had been held in reserve, and was only ordered to the front when the failure of the assault stood confessed, aggregated, for both the 11th and the 13th, 914; of whom 104 were killed, 718 wounded, 92 missing. Sully's brigade lost 122; Owen's 258; Hall's, which had been heavily engaged on both days, 515. The Nineteenth and Twentieth Massachusetts, which had shown such fine quality on the 11th, bore themselves with rare courage and discipline on the 13th; their losses were respectively 105 and 163. The new One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Pennsylvania lost 146. Among the officers of rank who fell in this division were Colonel Jennings, One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Pennsylvania; Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Baxter, Seventh Michigan; Major Chase Philbrick, Fifteenth Massachusetts, wounded; and Surgeon S. F. Haven, Jr., Fifteenth Massachusetts, killed. Captain Ferdinand Dreher, Twentieth Massachusetts, received wounds of which he subsequently died, having meanwhile been promoted lieutenant-colonel of the regiment.

The officers, below the rank of major, who had been killed or mortally wounded in the actions of the 11th and 13th, are as follows:

Captains Edward H. Becker, Emil Faber du Four, Max Boettcher and Oscar V. Heringer; Lieutenants Carl Slevoight, Frederic Jacobi, B. Von Buchenhagen, August Von Apel, Andrew Winter, all of the Seventh New York.

Captains Washington Brown, W. W. W. Wood and Andrew J. Mason; Lieutenants Fletcher Clay, John

Hubbard, Charles H. Riblet, Charles S. Carroll, Mavor R. Brown, and John W. Vincent, all of the One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania.

Captains John Murray, James B. Perry, and William A. Moore; Lieutenants Charles O. Ballou, George F. Nettleton, and Samuel B. Little, all of the Fifth New Hampshire.

Captain Elijah W. Gibbon; Lieutenants William A. Coomes, Theodore A. Stanley, and David E. Canfield, of the Fourteenth Connecticut.

Captain Salmon Winchester; Lieutenants Francis A. Morrell, and James M. Yardley, Tenth New York.

Captains B. E. Schwerzer and Addison C. Taylor, Twenty-seventh Connecticut.

Captains Julius Wehle and John P. Dodge, Sixty-sixth New York.

Captain Charles F. Cabot; Lieutenants L. F. Alley and R. S. Beckwith, Twentieth Massachusetts.

Captain William Fox and Lieutenant J. S. Shoemaker, One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Pennsylvania.

Captain William Laughlin and Lieutenant Franklin G. Torbert, One Hundred and Thirtieth Pennsylvania.

Captain Edward Reynolds and Lieutenant Hannibal Seymour, Fifty-ninth New York.

Captain John Sullivan, Sixty-third New York.

Captain Richard Allen, Eighth Ohio.

Lieutenants Thomas Murphy, Daniel McCarthy, and John R. Young, Eighty-eighth New York.

Lieutenants Edwin J. Weller, John Sullivan, and William Holland, Twenty-eighth Massachusetts.

Lieutenants Andrew Birmingham and Patrick Buckley, Sixty-ninth New York.

Lieutenants John O. Crowell and Alexander L. Robeson, Twenty-fourth New Jersey.

Lieutenants Clinton Swain (adjutant) and Z. Aydelott, Eighty-first Pennsylvania.

Lieutenants Christian Foltz and Robert B. Montgomery, One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenants Albert S. Phillips and Henry H. Darlington, First Delaware.

Lieutenant William Brighton, Fourth Ohio.

Lieutenant Franklin Emery, Seventh Michigan.

Lieutenant Francis M. Kelley, Fourteenth Indiana.

Lieutenant Isaac T. Cross, Fifty-third Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant B. F. Hibbs, Seventy-first Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Charles Laty (adjutant), Fifty-second New York.

Lieutenant Paul M. Pon, Fifty-seventh New York.

Lieutenant Frederick Parker, Sixty-fourth New York.

Lieutenant Thomas Claffee and Edgar M. Newcomb, Nineteenth Massachusetts.

Lieutenant Henry H. Hoagland, One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania.

After an absence of five days the regiments of the Second Corps reoccupied their camps on the left bank of the Rappahannock. Those camps were now far too large for the brigades which had borne the brunt of the fighting.

Many regiments had left one-half their numbers in front of the stone wall. But the loss was even greater than figures could show. Of the four thousand who had fallen, at least three thousand belonged to regiments that might already be called, in every sense of the term, veteran. More than two thousand were of the choicest flower of the Second Corps as it came from the

Peninsula. The blood of these men was precious—not more precious, indeed, to friends and relatives than the blood of the rawest recruits then coming into the field—but infinitely precious to the country, for every drop had in it the ineffable savor of victory.

Three days after the First Division returned to camp, it, as the most depleted division, received a reinforcement in the One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, Colonel James A. Beaver, a regiment which was thereafter, through all the terrible struggles to the glorious end, to be associated with the Second Corps, and never to be named without honor. The degree of discipline to which this new regiment of Western Pennsylvania troops had already, in four months of service, been brought by its accomplished commander, rendered it at once a conspicuous figure, whether among the camps of the division, on review, or in the field. The regiment was assigned to Caldwell's brigade as a companion to Brown's One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania, which had arrived just nine days before, in season to take part in the action of the 13th. On the same day with the One Hundred and Forty-eighth arrived the Twelfth New Jersey, Colonel R. C. Johnson, which was assigned to the Second Brigade of French's division. Two days later, viz., on the 20th of December, came another fine regiment from Western Pennsylvania, the One Hundred and Fortieth, Colonel Richard P. Roberts, which was assigned to Zook's brigade. These successive reinforcements raised the corps to an aggregate, on December 31, 1862, of 34,129; but of this number, so severe had been the losses of the year, the total present for duty was but 862 officers and 15,339 enlisted men.

The following table exhibits more strikingly than

words the history of the Second Corps. There are no returns for August or October.

| | Present for duty. | On extra or daily duty. | Sick or wounded. | In arrest or con- finement. | Absent. | Aggre- gate. |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------|-----------------|
| May 31st | 16,583 | 572 | 757 | 15 | 3,195 | 21,122 |
| June 30th | 14,737 | 896 | 1,561 | 28 | 4,485 | 21,707 |
| July 31st | 16,013 | 1,099 | 2,677 | 106 | 4,939 | 24,834 |
| September 30th*..... | 9,594 | 978 | 882 | 66 | 9,656 | 21,176 |
| September 30th †..... | 13,386 | 1,327 | 1,254 | 87 | 12,969 | 29,023 |
| November 30th | 15,050 | 1,375 | 945 | 109 | 11,064 | 28,543 |
| December 31st | 16,201 | 1,848 | 2,128 | 83 | 13,869 | 34,129 |

* Without French's division.

† With French's division.

The following table shows these figures reduced to percentages.

| | Present for duty. | On extra or daily duty. | Present for duty or on extra or daily duty. | Present, sick or in arrest. | Total pres- ent. | Absent. | Aggre- gate. |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------|---------|-----------------|
| May 31st | 76.62 | 2.9 | 81.52 | 3.6 | 85.12 | 14.88 | 100 |
| June 30th | 67.89 | 4.13 | 72.02 | 7.32 | 79.34 | 20.66 | 100 |
| July 31st | 64.48 | 11.21 | 75.69 | 4.42 | 80.11 | 19.89 | 100 |
| September 30th*..... | 45.3 | 4.62 | 49.92 | 4.48 | 54.40 | 45.6 | 100 |
| September 30th †..... | 46.12 | 4.57 | 50.69 | 4.62 | 55.31 | 44.69 | 100 |
| November 30th | 52.73 | 4.82 | 57.55 | 3.69 | 61.24 | 38.76 | 100 |
| December 31st.... | 40.64 | 5.41 | 46.05 | 6.48 | 52.53 | 47.47 | 100 |

* Without French's division.

† With French's division.

Here is to be discerned the path of the cannon-ball as clearly as at Fredericksburg, where, as General Longstreet, in his official report, says, the gaps made in the advancing lines of the Second Corps "could be seen at the distance of a mile."

If from the returns from December 31st the new regiments were excluded, the present for duty would sink to thirty-five in one hundred. Had the losses of the 13th of December been sustained in equal fight, they would have been borne by the troops with a very different feel-

ing; but the open-eyed intelligence and the quick insight into mechanical relations, which characterize the American volunteer and which make him, when properly led, the most formidable soldier of the world, render him also a very poor subject for "fooling." The privates in the ranks knew just as well as their officers that they had not had a fair chance at Fredericksburg; and in their minds they dismissed Burnside from the command long before the Administration was prepared to act.

This was strikingly shown at a review of the corps held shortly after the battle, at which both General Burnside and General Sumner were present. The commander of the army was received with such freezing silence by the troops that General Sumner directed General Couch to have the men called upon for cheers. But although the corps and division commanders and their staffs rode along the lines, waving their caps or their swords, only a few derisive cries were heard. And yet these men would have fought bravely enough if attacked—would even have crossed the river again if ordered, without much straggling (though it must be confessed desertions were now unusually frequent); and, had they but seen "little Mac" riding over the field to take command of them once more, would have broken into cheers that would have made the welkin ring, and have asked nothing better than to be led against the enemy.

Another cause which aggravated the discontent was the failure of "Major Cash" to make his appearance at regimental headquarters for some time,¹ as witness this

¹ In his final report, General Burnside lays some stress on this delay of the pay department. He says: "The army had not been paid for several months, which caused great dissatisfaction among the soldiers and their friends at home, and increased the number of desertions to a fearful extent."

inscription on a letter which was one day handed in at corps headquarters, manifestly from Kimball's brigade : " Plees pass fre, ded brock 1,000 miles from home and no pa from Uncle Sam in six months." Whether from recognition of the justice of the plea, or from admiration of the courageous attempt at phonetic spelling, corps headquarters affixed the necessary stamp, and sent the letter on its way rejoicing, and, let us hope, to rejoice.

During the month of December, 1862, the following changes took place among the field officers of the corps : Colonel James C. Pinckney, Sixty-sixth New York was honorably discharged, December 3d ; that gallant veteran, Colonel William Raymond Lee, Twentieth Massachusetts, resigned, December 17th, in consequence of his increasing infirmities ; Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel G. Langley, Fifth New Hampshire, resigned, December 1st ; Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver Hopkinson, First Delaware, December 14th ; Major John H. Richardson, Seventh Michigan, December 30th. Lieutenant-Colonel John W. Kimball, Fifteenth Massachusetts, was promoted to the colonelcy of the Fifty-third Massachusetts, serving in another department. Lieutenant-Colonel E. A. L. Roberts, Twenty-eighth New Jersey, was dismissed the service.

Fortunately, the miseries of the " mud campaign " were not added to the hard lot of the Second Corps. As Sumner's Right Grand Division was encamped in plain sight of the enemy, it was deemed necessary that it should remain in position, while the Left and Centre Grand Divisions were withdrawn and marched to United States Ford, in Burnside's last wild effort to justify himself. So it was planned that the right should become the left, in the contemplated movement, and the two corps of Sumner should stay in their camps until Franklin and Hooker

should have accomplished the turning movement, when Sumner should again cross at Fredericksburg. Of the painful and ludicrous experiences of the four days, January 20-23, it is not necessary to speak here, for the Second Corps was snugly in camp and only heard by report how the other corps struggled toward their destination through fathomless mud; lay upon the soaked ground in an unrelenting downpour through night and day; toiled at pontoons and cannons that would not budge for all the pulling and hauling of man or beast; and went half-starved for lack of supplies which the wagons, stuck fast in the mire, could not bring up to the front. To all these things did the men of the Second Corps seriously, yet not mournfully incline, as the tidings came back by splashed and spattered messengers from United States Ford, or as they saw the bedraggled troops of the less fortunate corps pull themselves wearily back to camp. The writer of this narrative was returning from General Sumner's headquarters, on that final day of the "mud campaign," when he encountered on the way a small party of perhaps twenty men, a sergeant at their head, to whom this inquiry was addressed: "Who are these men, sergeant?" Never will the writer forget the uncompromising tone in which the answer came back: "Stragglers of the Seventeenth Maine, sir!" Had the reply been "the color guard," or "a forlorn hope," it could not have been more cheerfully and promptly given.

Among the best-deserved promotions which followed the great action of Fredericksburg, was that of Colonel Samuel K. Zook, Fifty-seventh New York, to be Brigadier-General of Volunteers. General Zook had, in every battle where his regiment became engaged, displayed conspicuous courage and ability.

On the 26th of January, 1863, General Sumner, borne

down by increasing infirmities, retired forever from active operations in the field, where he had borne himself with a courage, simplicity, and magnanimity rarely seen in men. No one of his soldiers had ever imagined that the brave old man would die in his bed; but so it was, and within the brief space of three months, this life of stirring endeavor, of heroic devotion to duty, of daring enterprise and unshrinking exposure to danger, was to end peacefully, at his home in Syracuse, from mere exhaustion of the vital principle. In bidding farewell to the troops he had so long commanded, General Sumner said: "I have only to recall to you the memory of the past, in which you have fought so many battles, with credit and honor always; in which you have captured so many colors, without losing a single gun or standard; and to urge that, keeping this recollection in your hearts, you prove yourselves worthy of it. It is only in so doing that you can retain for yourselves a reputation well won, and which, I feel, will be preserved under the gallant and able commander, Major-General Couch, to whom I confide you."

CHAPTER VII.

CHANCELLORSVILLE.

THE "mud campaign" was speedily followed by the removal of General Burnside. Major-General Joseph Hooker, who, ever since Antietam, had been confidently awaiting his turn, succeeded to the command. He it was who, on the 19th of November, after Burnside's plan for crossing the Rappahannock at Fredericksburg, in surprise of the enemy, had failed through the non-arrival of the engineers' pontoons, had tendered the excellent advice that the Third and Fifth Corps should cross the Rappahannock, by the upper fords, and move directly on Saxton's Junction. He was now to be allowed full opportunity to try the virtue of a turning movement against Lee, in the place of that direct attack in which Burnside had so disastrously failed. But even of this opportunity Hooker, once in command, did not purpose to avail himself until the army should be thoroughly reorganized and refitted from its terrible losses, and until the weather should render impossible such a ludicrous fiasco as that which ended the "mud campaign." And admirably did Hooker take advantage of that respite from active field work. The Army of the Potomac never spent three months to better advantage.

Whatever his merits or his shortcomings as a commander, Hooker was surely an ideal inspector-general. That branch of the staff was not so much reorganized as

created; new energy was breathed into all the departments, and important changes were made in the organization and distribution of the army trains. It was in this period that the cavalry was brought to the point of discipline, address, and courage which ever afterward made it formidable, even to the Confederate infantry; preparing for the noble work it was to do at Brandy Station, at Gettysburg, at Yellow Tavern, at Reams Station, and in a score of other actions. The artillery, too, was carried to a pitch of perfection in all exercises never before thought of. Our volunteer gunners had, indeed, from the first been wonderfully expert; but it is not merely shooting straight on certain occasions which makes a battery useful. There must be the care of pieces, horses, accoutrements, and ammunition, in camp and on the march, and the thorough discipline of men and animals which will enable a battery to go through a long and arduous campaign, amid discomfort and privation, without loss of strength or spirit, without "slumping in" at critical moments, or finding anything lacking or broken-down or misplaced, no matter how quick the call, or how sharp the emergency. There are a hundred exigencies with artillery beyond those known to infantry, which render first-class training and discipline enormously profitable in a campaign. Under Hooker, for the first time, the difference between regulars and volunteers ceased to exist so far as this arm of the service was concerned. Up to that time, notwithstanding the rare excellence of certain batteries, like Hazard's, Arnold's, and Pettit's, with their peerless gunners, that difference was still perceptible, clearly so at the beginning of a campaign, and more so at the close of one.

Hooker caused it to disappear entirely. Amid the forty-eight guns which formed the battery of the Second

Corps in April, 1863, no eye, however skilled, could discern which belonged to regular and which to volunteer batteries, even though the former comprised such as I, of the First, with Edmund Kirby in command, or A of the Fourth, under Alonzo Cushing.¹ The infantry, too, gained greatly in discipline, carriage, and perfection of appointments, under Hooker, although here less had been left to be done in making the volunteers of 1861 and 1862 effective for all the purposes of camp, march, and battle. Furthermore, to reinforce the Army of the Potomac, depleted by its losses on the 11th and 13th of December, the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps, under Generals Howard and Slocum respectively, were called in from other departments and assigned to General Hooker's command. The Grand Division organization was definitely abandoned, General Sumner retiring, as has been stated, on account of his age and infirmities, and General Franklin being sent to the rear in consequence of Burnside's allegations that he had not displayed proper energy on the 13th of December.

Another feature, introduced in General Hooker's administration, was the adoption of "corps badges," which became very dear to the troops, a source of much emulation on the part of the several commands, and a great convenience to the staff, in enabling them, quickly and without troublesome inquiries, to identify divisions upon the march or along the line of battle. The device assigned to the Second Corps was the trefoil, or cloverleaf, the first division having in it red, the second in white, the third in blue. The *personnel* of the com-

¹ Lieutenant Cushing had, after the battle of Fredericksburg, been transferred from the engineers to that branch of the service which he was to make illustrious by his life and by his death.

manding officers of the Second Corps underwent numerous and important changes during the months, January to April, 1863. General Couch, always in delicate health, owing to a constitution undermined in Mexico, was obliged for some weeks to relinquish the chief command, which was taken up by General Sedgwick, who, returning from his Antietam wounds, had not yet received that assignment which was to make him forever renowned in the history of the war, as the leader of the Sixth Corps. Among the division commanders, all of whom were promoted to be major-generals, to have date November 29, 1862, no change occurred during this period until General O. O. Howard's assignment in April to the command of the Eleventh Corps, formerly Sigel's. General Howard was succeeded in the command of the Second Division, by Brigadier-General John Gibbon, from the First Corps, who had greatly distinguished himself on the left, under Franklin, at Fredericksburg.

Among the brigade commanders the following changes occurred, beyond those incident to winter leaves of absence, etc. The fine action of Colonel John R. Brooke, Fifty-third Pennsylvania, in front of Marye's Heights, led to the formation of a new brigade out of the troops of the First Division, for the express purpose of giving so admirable an officer a command worthy of his abilities. Generals Caldwell, Meagher and Zook retained command of the First, Second, and Third Brigades respectively. In the Second Division Colonel William Lee, Twentieth Massachusetts, returning on December 15th, assumed command of the Third Brigade, only to resign it with his commission, on the 17th. He was succeeded in the colonelcy of his regiment by Lieutenant-Colonel Francis W. Palfrey, still absent on account of

his severe Antietam wounds. Colonel Hall, of the Seventh Michigan, resumed command of the brigade which he had so well led on the 11th and 13th. In the Second Brigade, Colonel J. T. Owen, Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania Volunteers, was, after Fredericksburg, promoted to be brigadier-general, to bear date November 29, 1862, and assigned to the command of the brigade. The Senate having refused General Owen's confirmation, he ceased to be in service on March 4, 1863; but was re-appointed on the 30th of the month, to the same grade, by the President. Colonel Dennis O. Kane had succeeded Owen in command of the regiment. In the Third Division the changes among brigade commanders were more numerous. In the First Brigade Colonel John S. Mason, who had worthily borne the command after General Kimball was wounded, December 13th, was promoted to be brigadier-general, and assigned to duty in another field. His place was taken by an officer who was to remain for two years not only one of the most useful and efficient of commanders, but one of the most brilliant and picturesque among the prominent figures of the Second Corps. This was Colonel S. Sprigg Carroll, Eighth Ohio Volunteers. His regiment had joined the corps at Harrison's Landing; but he himself had remained in the Third Corps, in command of a brigade. In April of 1863, however, he rejoined his regiment and, by seniority, took command of the brigade.

The Second Brigade continued to be commanded by Colonel Morris, of the Fourteenth Connecticut, until, in January, Brigadier-General William Hays, who had long been connected with the service of the reserve artillery of the Army of the Potomac, but was hereafter to be honorably associated with the Second Corps, was assigned to the command. The Third Brigade was, after the bat-

tle of December 13, 1862, commanded by Colonel McGregor, Fourth New York.

The Act of Congress of July 17, 1862, had provided for a distinct staff for army corps headquarters ; and on the 1st of January, 1863, the staff which had served General Couch from his accession to the command of the corps, in October, received appointments to the same or new positions, with increased rank. The following officers after this date constituted the staff of the corps :

Lieutenant-Colonel Charles H. Morgan, assistant inspector-general and chief of staff.

Lieutenant-Colonel Francis A. Walker, assistant adjutant-general.

Lieutenant-Colonel Richard N. Batchelder, chief quartermaster.

Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph S. Smith, chief commissary of subsistence.

Surgeon J. H. Taylor, medical director.

Major James E. Mallon, Forty-second New York, provost marshal.

Major John B. Burt, aide-de-camp.

Captain John S. Schultze, aide-de-camp.

Captain J. Nelson Potter, aide-de-camp.

Captain E. B. Brownson, commissary of musters.

Among the foregoing names, two demand especial mention, since their appointment upon the staff marked the introduction of a new force into the life of the Second Corps, as distinctly as the arrival of fresh and strong regiments would have done. Colonel Morgan, a New Yorker by birth, a graduate from West Point in the class of 1857, a soldier of the Utah expedition of 1859, under Albert Sydney Johnston, and of the West Virginia and Peninsula campaigns of 1861-2, under McClellan, had reached the rank of captain of artillery in the regular

army, when in October, 1862, he was assigned by General Sumner to duty as chief of artillery for the Second Corps. General Couch found him in this position, and being deeply impressed with his military scholarship, sound sense, and high ideal of soldierly duty, caused him to be appointed inspector-general of the corps, and announced him as chief of the corps staff. Certainly the army of the United States possessed, at that time, few men equally well qualified for a position so high and so arduous. Tireless, vigilant, and sagacious, his life for the next two years was bound up in a remarkable intimacy with the experience of the Second Corps, and its fame must always be, in a high degree, his claim to renown. Wherever the corps went he literally led the way. Did the head of the column emerge, from long toiling through woods and swamps, upon the plain where the troops were to bivouac, Morgan seemed to have been an hour there, and it was his hand which pointed each division to its resting-place. Was the enemy suddenly encountered upon the march, it was Morgan who first seized the significance of the situation, who sent the batteries galloping to their ground, and threw the leading brigades into position to receive the impending attack. Was some desperate assault upon intrenched works to be undertaken in the early morning, the indefatigable chief-of-staff of the Second Corps rode hour after hour along the lines, scanning every feature of the field until the sun went down; often would he steal out in the night to watch, against the midnight sky, the outlines of the frowning works that were to be carried at any cost, and there would he seek to find some suggestion for his guidance on the bitter, bloody morrow; and when the faintest streak of dawn colored the eastern sky, the general of division, riding to the head of his column, brushed



BRIG.-GEN. CHARLES H. MORGAN
Inspector General and Chief of Staff, Second Army Corps
1862—1864

against the chief-of-staff, and heard his low, measured tones describing to the commander of the foremost brigade the work to be done and the way to do it.

Colonel Batchelder was one of the best, if not himself the very best, contribution made by the volunteer force to the supply department of the army. His subsequent promotion to be chief-quartermaster of the Army of the Potomac, and his present high position in the regular army, are evidence of the manner in which his duties with the Second Corps were discharged. However exacting the demands of the infantry or the artillery, of the commissariat or the hospital service, they were always met, and met so easily that it seemed the simplest thing in the world to be done. It was impossible that the roads could become so bad as to keep the Second Corps trains back. No matter how the troops were marched about, by day or by night, in advance or in retreat, the inevitable six-mule wagon was always close behind. "Old Rucker" would have wasted more profanity on one requisition for forty nose-bags than Batchelder found necessary in running the teams of a whole corps for twelve months. Under such a chief-quartermaster, the gift of "exhorting impenitent mules" fell almost into disuse. The toughest animal was converted immediately on entering the Second Corps, and never backslid, even under the provocation of two and a half feet of yellow mud. The service rendered to the troops by this sagacious and efficient officer could hardly be overestimated.

The changes among the field officers of the corps during the period, January to April inclusive, were very numerous, mainly in consequence of wounds received in the bloody battles of Antietam and Fredericksburg, or of the severities of field service. Colonel William Linn Tidball, Fifty-ninth New York, resigned January 10th;

Colonel James A. Suiter, Thirty-fourth New York, January 22d; Colonel William Harrow, Fourteenth Indiana (subsequently appointed Brigadier-General of Volunteers), January 21st; Colonel John W. Andrews, First Delaware (disabled at Fredericksburg), February 6th; Colonel Frederick D. Sewall, Nineteenth Maine, February 19th; Lieutenant-Colonel George N. Bomford, Forty-second New York, March 28th; Lieutenant-Colonel Chase Philbrick, Fifteenth Massachusetts (wounded at Fredericksburg), April 16th.

The following officers were discharged in January: Colonel V. M. Wilcox, One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania; Colonel Dennis Heenan, One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania (wounded at Fredericksburg); Lieutenant-Colonel St. Clair A. Mulholland,¹ One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania (wounded at Fredericksburg); Major George H. Bardwell, One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania; in February, Colonel Robert C. Johnson, Twelfth New Jersey; Lieutenant-Colonel John Markoe, Seventy-first Pennsylvania; Lieutenant-Colonel James Quinlan, Eighty-eighth New York; Major Cyrus C. Clark, Fourteenth Connecticut (wounded at Fredericksburg); in March, Colonel Edmund C. Charles, Forty-second New York (wounded at Glendale); Colonel Oliver H. Palmer, One Hundred and Eighth New York; Lieutenant-Colonel John Devereaux, Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania; Major Theodore Byxbee, Twenty-seventh Connecticut; in April, Colonel Francis W. Palfrey, Twentieth Massachusetts (wounded at Antietam); Lieutenant-Colonel Sanford H. Perkins, Fourteenth Connecticut (wounded at Fredericksburg); Lieutenant-Colonel Robert M. Lee, Jr., Eighty-first Pennsylvania.

¹ Re-entered the service.

Lieutenant-Colonel William G. Jones, Seventy-first Pennsylvania, was promoted, April 6th, to be colonel of the Thirty-sixth Ohio, in the Western army ; Lieutenant-Colonel Henry Baxter, Seventh Michigan, was promoted, April 19th, to be Brigadier-General of Volunteers, and assigned to the command of a brigade of the First Corps. Captain John D. Frank, First New York Artillery, who had commanded Battery G with credit, resigned April 4th.

The changes in troops during the period under consideration were few. We have spoken of the arrival of the Nineteenth Maine, of the Twenty-eighth Massachusetts, Twenty-fourth and Twenty-eighth New Jersey, the Twenty-seventh Connecticut, and the One Hundred and Sixteenth, One Hundred and Twenty-seventh, and One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania, between Antietam and Fredericksburg, most of these regiments arriving but a few days prior to the latter action, and of the One Hundred and Fortieth and One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, and the Twelfth New Jersey, within a week of the return of the corps from its fruitless and bloody expedition across the Rappahannock. Against these greatly needed reinforcements were to be set two causes of loss, besides the casualties of the battle-field. In the first place, three well-approved New York regiments were approaching the expiration of their term of enlistment, which had been for two years. These regiments were the Fourth, Seventh, and Tenth. Of these¹

¹ The Seventh, the Steuben Regiment, was mustered out May 8, 1863, George Van Schack, colonel ; F. A. H. Goebel, lieutenant-colonel ; Charles Brestel, major. During the campaign of 1864 a new regiment under the same name, and under the same colonel, was assigned to the Second Corps. The Fourth (the Scott Life

the Seventh disappeared from the returns of the corps in April, the Fourth in May, while the Tenth continued to be borne on the rolls as a battalion, the recruits and re-enlisted men having been organized into six companies under Major George F. Hopper; Colonel Bendix, Lieutenant-Colonel Marshall, and Major Missing being mustered out May 7th.

The second cause of depletion was to be found in the approaching end of the period of enlistment of the nine months' regiments. The loss from this source threatened to affect the Second Corps perhaps less than some others, yet even here it was destined to carry off not less than six regiments, viz.: the Twenty-seventh Connecticut, the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh, One Hundred and Thirtieth, and One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania, and the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-eighth New Jersey.

The latter of the two causes which have been indicated was undoubtedly an element in the situation which increased greatly the pressure upon General Hooker to engage the enemy at an early day; yet, owing to the stress of weather, he was not able to begin his contemplated movement around Lee's left flank until not a few of the nine months' regiments had been disbanded, while others were so near the expiry of their term of service as seriously to affect their efficiency in battle.

The following was the organization of the Second Corps on the eve of Chancellorsville.

Guard) was mustered out May 25, 1863, John D. McGregor, colonel; William Jameson, lieutenant-colonel; Charles W. Kruger, major.

THE CORPS.

MAJOR-GENERAL D. N. COUCH, COMMANDING.

Escort: Companies D and K, Sixth New York Cavalry, Captain Riley Johnson.

Artillery Reserve: I, First United States; A, Fourth United States.

FIRST DIVISION, MAJOR-GENERAL W. S. HANCOCK.

First Brigade, Brigadier-General J. C. Caldwell: Fifth New Hampshire, Sixty-first New York, Eighty-first and One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania.

Second Brigade, Brigadier-General T. F. Meagher: Twenty-eighth Massachusetts, One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania, Sixty-third, Sixty-ninth, and Eighty-eighth New York.

Third Brigade, Brigadier-General S. K. Zook: Fifty-Second, Fifty-seventh, and Sixty-sixth New York, One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania.

Fourth Brigade, Colonel John R. Brooke: Fifty-third and One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania, Second Delaware, Sixty-fourth New York, Twenty-seventh Connecticut.

Artillery: B, First New York; C, Fourth United States.

SECOND DIVISION, BRIGADIER-GENERAL JOHN GIBBON.

First Brigade, Brigadier-General Alfred Sully: First Minnesota, Nineteenth Maine, Fifteenth Massachusetts, Thirty-fourth and Eighty-second New York, First Company (Andrews) Massachusetts Sharpshooters.

Second Brigade, Brigadier-General J. T. Owen:

Sixty-ninth, Seventy-first, Seventy-second, One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania.

Third Brigade, Colonel N. J. Hall: Seventh Michigan, Nineteenth and Twentieth Massachusetts, Forty-second and Fifty-ninth New York, One Hundred and Twenty-seventh Pennsylvania.

Artillery: A and B, First Rhode Island.

THIRD DIVISION, MAJOR-GENERAL W. H. FRENCH.

First Brigade, Colonel S. S. Carroll: Fourth and Eighth Ohio, Fourteenth Indiana, Seventh West Virginia, Twenty-fourth and Twenty-eighth New Jersey.

Second Brigade, Brigadier-General William Hays: Fourteenth Connecticut, Twelfth New Jersey, One Hundred and Eighth New York, One Hundred and Thirtieth Pennsylvania.

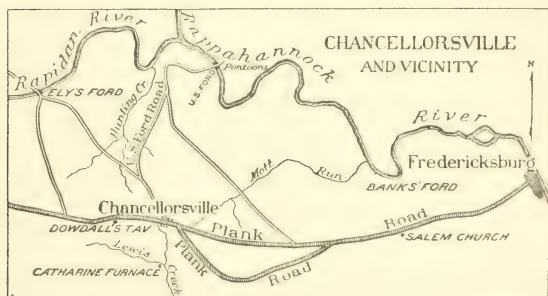
Third Brigade, Colonel J. D. McGregor: Fourth New York, Tenth New York Battalion, First Delaware, One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania.

Artillery: G, First New York; G, First Rhode Island.

Such was the organization of the corps when summoned to the great battle of May, 1863. Since the 15th of December it had not been called upon to do any duty outside its camps, except only that, on the 25th of February, the Second Division had moved to Berea Church to support the cavalry under Stoneman, but had returned to camp on the day following. Hooker's long anticipated movement began on the 21st of April, but the Second Corps was not to leave its camps till several days later. The plan of the commanding-general was to move a column up the Rappahannock to a point so far above Fredericksburg as to secure the unopposed crossing of the river, which column, descending rapidly along the right

bank, should uncover the fords nearer to Fredericksburg, so as to allow the whole army, or the greater part of it, to be thrown upon Lee's left flank. In order, however, to distract Lee's attention, Doubleday's division was, on the 21st, sent in the opposite direction, as far as to Port Conway, twenty miles below Fredericksburg.

This column not only made a show of building a bridge, but actually crossed troops in boats to Port Royal, on the opposite bank. This feint having been carried on, the real movement began on the 27th, when



Howard's Eleventh, Slocum's Twelfth, and Meade's Fifth Corps marched to Kelly's Ford on the Rappahannock, twenty-seven miles above Fredericksburg, which they reached on the day following. During the night of the 28th and the morning of the 29th, the crossing took place without opposition though not without observation; and the turning force, in two columns, began its march down the Rappahannock. The crossing of the Rapidan, which river enters the Rappahannock from the west below Kelly's, was effected at Germanna and Ely's Fords; and the three corps, which had thus far conducted

a brilliantly planned scheme with energy and celerity, pushed on toward Chancellorsville. It was now the turn of the Second Corps to take part in the operation. On the 27th the Irish Brigade was sent up to Banks' and United States Fords. Colonel Kelly with the Eighty-eighth and Sixty-third New York remained at Banks'; General Meagher with the remaining regiments advanced to United States Ford. On the next day, the First and Third Divisions marched at sunrise in the direction of Banks', near which they bivouacked for the night, Carroll's brigade being sent forward to United States Ford. At 2.30 P.M. of the 29th the two divisions were pushed forward to that ford, where they awaited the arrival of the turning column upon the opposite bank.

During that night General Couch desired to communicate with General Meade, in order both properly to adjust his own movements to those of the Fifth Corps, and to transmit an important despatch from General Hooker, and for this purpose despatched Major Burt, of his staff, up the left bank of the river. The manner in which this spirited young officer discharged this duty deserves to be put on record as a monument of enterprise, pluck, and good riding. At about eleven o'clock, on an intensely dark and rainy night, Major Burt set out, rode to Hartwood Church, thence to Kelly's Ford, thence over the river to General Meade's headquarters, a distance of at least thirty-five miles. Delivering his message and receiving General Meade's reply, he stopped only long enough to change horses, when, it being now morning, he rode straight forward down the river-bank toward, into, and through the enemy's lines, being mistaken, from his fearlessness and directness, for one of their own people, a mistake which was only discovered as Burt, putting spurs to his horse, plunged into the river at the

United States Ford, where he was at once covered by a half-dozen rifles. Swimming his horse through the shower of balls, the gallant young rider reached the opposite bank, galloped over the crest, and appeared at corps headquarters after one of the finest pieces of staff work ever performed. He was, indeed, a model aide-de-camp, the flower of the junior staff, a prince of army light horsemen, absolutely fearless and always ready for duty.

While the movement which has been recorded on the part of the First and Third Divisions was in progress, the Second Division, under Gibbon, remained in camp, being destined to support Sedgwick's Sixth Corps, and not again to see its fellow-divisions until the battle should have been fought and lost. In speaking of the Second Corps during the remainder of this chapter, we shall be understood, unless it is otherwise expressed, to mean only the two divisions which, under General Couch, took part in the operations above Fredericksburg.

And now it could not be kept from General Lee that the Army of the Potomac was in motion. Though it was no longer possible to make a feint of crossing at Port Royal, Hooker manœuvred his left wing, consisting of the First, Third, and Sixth Corps, with Gibbon's division of the Second Corps, all under command of General Sedgwick, in such a manner as to keep his adversary gravely perplexed as to his real intentions.

Four pontoon bridges were built across the river near the scene of Franklin's crossing in December; two divisions were actually thrown over, and everything was done to create the belief that the real attack was to be made against Lee's right.

During the morning of the 30th, the advance of the Second Corps moved down to the bank of the river, at United States Ford; and the construction of a bridge was

commenced, the enemy's pickets retiring from view on the opposite side. During the afternoon, beginning at 3.15 P.M., the two divisions crossed the river—and that night bivouacked one mile from Chancellorsville, headquarters being at the Chandler House. The Fifth New Hampshire, Eighty-first Pennsylvania, and Eighty-eighth New York, under Colonel Cross, had been left as a guard to the corps ammunition-train. Four regiments of the Irish Brigade had been posted on a road leading from the main road to Banks' Ford.

At the Chandler House, about nine o'clock in the evening, appeared General Hooker, on his way to the front, in great spirits. Thus far the campaign had, indeed, been a triumphant success. Without any appreciable loss Hooker had placed his right wing, consisting of three infantry corps and two divisions, in a position threatening Lee's left flank; his own left wing, consisting of three infantry corps and one division, had effected a bloodless crossing of the river below Fredericksburg; and Lee was yet altogether in uncertainty as to the real intention of the Union commander.

We have accounted for the seven infantry corps of the Army of the Potomac; but what of the cavalry? It is in the answer to this question that we find the first of that series of lamentable mistakes which turned the operations, so brilliantly begun, into a disaster. The main body of the magnificent cavalry corps, now numbering twelve thousand sabres, under Stoneman, had been sent to cut Lee's communications, in order to hinder and embarrass his anticipated retreat. But in movements like those which Hooker had undertaken, the cavalry could not be spared from the immediate operations of the army. It was needed to clear the way for the marching columns of infantry, to hold ground far out in front and

on the flanks of the lines of battle, to prevent surprises, and by rapid and audacious movements, hither and thither, to vex the enemy with continual alarms.

While the movements of the Union commander, from the 27th to the 29th of April, had been not only brilliant but audacious, it had been observed that, even on approaching Chancellorsville, General Hooker showed signs of that hesitation which was, two days later, to thwart his own project. The concentration of the right wing on the 30th of April had been effected much less rapidly than it might have been, without distressing the troops, and the morning of the 1st of May found General Hooker irresolute when victory was already within his grasp. Sickles' Third Corps, which had been called up from the left so soon as the occupation of Chancellorsville was assured, was now crossing at United States Ford. With such superiority of numbers, on the Union side, there was no justification for an hour's delay. The cry should have been "forward," at least until the turning column, consisting now of four corps and two divisions, should be deployed before Lee's positions. Not only is this the sole policy of safety and success in movements like those which Hooker had undertaken, but two additional reasons, perfectly obvious at the time, existed to make such a policy in this instance peculiarly imperative. One was that the farther Hooker pushed forward from Chancellorsville toward Fredericksburg, the better was the opportunity afforded for the development of his superior infantry and artillery. The ground about Chancellorsville was low, much of it densely wooded. By moving promptly out toward Fredericksburg, Hooker would have placed his army on high ground, obtaining commanding positions for his artillery and comparatively clear ground for the movements and manœuvres of his

infantry. The second reason, special to the situation, imperatively demanding an immediate advance, was that to gain four or five miles toward Fredericksburg was to uncover Banks' Ford, and, by so doing, to shorten, by nearly one-half, the distance over which the troops of the left wing could be brought to reinforce the right. So plain was this dictate of the situation, that General Hooker, though after a hesitation most ominous of evil, gave the order for an advance.

There were three roads leading toward Fredericksburg. The first was the river road, down which were sent Griffin's and Humphreys' divisions of the Fifth Corps. The two other roads, known as the turnpike and plank road, sustain a somewhat peculiar relation to each other; forking near Chancellorsville, they run in the same general direction, in places a mile apart, in other places half a mile, till they unite again a little beyond Tabernacle Church, half the way to Fredericksburg. Down the turnpike Sykes' division of the Fifth Corps was pushed, supported by Hancock's division of the Second Corps. With this column went Couch. Slocum with the Twelfth Corps moved down the plank road. Thus three columns, within easy connecting distance, took up the march together. Nearly fifty thousand men of the Second, Fifth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Corps were close on hand, while Sickles, with the Third Corps, was rapidly coming up from behind. These columns proceeded, against all the opposition the enemy were able to offer, until they gained a ridge which sweeps across the three roads mentioned, crossing the turnpike somewhat more than two miles from Chancellorsville. The position reached was one in every way easy to hold. It afforded room and range for a powerful artillery, and could readily have been crowned before night by ninety guns.

The ground in front was largely open ; the roads behind sufficiently numerous for a rapid reinforcement of the line or for a safe retreat. The field was exactly such a one as the men of the Army of the Potomac had always been crying out for—one on which they could see the enemy they were called to fight. Yet this position General Hooker, in an evil hour, determined to abandon, not for one farther advanced, but for the low and wooded ground about Chancellorsville, relinquishing the very form and show of aggression, retreating before the enemy, and taking up a line which was completely commanded by the high ground already occupied. The act was little short of suicide. At about two o'clock orders were sent to the commanders of the several columns to withdraw to the vicinity of the Chancellor House. So manifest and so monstrous was the blunder, that the officers who were sent with this message could not bear to carry it, nor could the officers to whom it was sent bring themselves to believe that General Hooker had such an intention.

To General Couch, whom an ever-burning desire to be at the front had led to follow the one division of his corps, Hancock's, which had been sent up the turnpike, the message was brought by General G. K. Warren, then chief engineer officer of the Army of the Potomac. General Warren, in delivering the order for withdrawal,¹

¹ The following was the order of withdrawal. The text is in the handwriting of General Warren.

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
May 1, 1863.

General Sykes will retire to his position of last night, and take up a line connecting his right with General Slocum, making his line as strong as he can by felling trees, etc. General Couch will then retire to his position of last night.

Major-General HOOKER.

stated with great pain and some passion, that he had entreated General Hooker not to take this most mischievous step, but in vain. Sykes was already falling back behind Hancock ; but, upon General Warren's statement, General Couch, while preparing to obey the order, so far as concerned Hancock's division, determined at least to delay its execution until he could communicate to the commanding general his own earnest belief that the position which had been reached should be held, and he accordingly despatched Major Burt, his senior aide, to headquarters, with urgent representations as to the admirable nature of the ground he held, and his ability to "stand off" any enemy on his front, if Meade and Slocum could keep their place on his flanks. Major Burt returned with a peremptory order to retire. A little later, however, General Hooker, impressed by this unanimity of testimony on the part of his staff and corps commanders, sent word to General Couch that he might remain out on the turnpike until five o'clock, while Slocum would hold ground on the plank road on his right ; but when this message ¹ reached the commander of the Second Corps it was clearly too late ; Hancock's column was already in the road, while Slocum had so far with-

¹ The following is the order, the text of which appears to be in General Warren's handwriting :

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.
May 1, 1863.

GENERAL COUCH :

Hold on to your position till 5 P.M., and extend your skirmishers on each flank, so as to secure yourself against being surrounded. General Slocum will hold a position on the plank road equally advanced.

By command of Major-General HOOKER.
WILLIAM L. CANDLER, *Captain, Aide-de-Camp.*

drawn from his right, that the enemy, following up the Twelfth Corps along the plank road, had placed artillery in position which completely enfiladed Couch's line. Indeed, so long had Couch delayed, in his anxiety to have Hooker's error repaired, that his own withdrawal became somewhat critical. Not only had the enemy's skirmishers begun to press down from the front, but they sought to push in behind Hancock from the ground on the right, which Slocum had given up, a movement which was vigorously resisted by Miles with the Sixty-first New York, and Frank with the Fifty-second. The road leading back from the advanced position to Chancellorsville was now full of troops; and the enemy, bringing up a battery in front, sought to get the range of it. At this juncture, General Couch, saying "let us draw their fire," called up his escort and all his staff and rode boldly out into view, at some distance from the road, a movement more immediately successful than all concerned were disposed to enjoy. "This entire forgetfulness or disregard of self," says General Morgan, "characteristic of that pure-minded officer, was not, I fear, appreciated fully by some of his staff, who had not yet arrived at the pitch of magnanimity which would make them desirous of stopping shots intended for others."

As the retiring column came nearer to Chancellorsville, the efforts of the enemy to interrupt their retreat became more vigorous, but, by the skilful conduct of Hancock's skirmishers, and by assistance promptly rendered by Sykes' "regulars," Hancock came off safely, and took position across the turnpike, about half a mile from Chancellorsville, between divisions of the Fifth Corps on the left and on the right.

The Army of the Potomac, which at noon was in full advance on Fredericksburg, with high hopes elate, had

now, under the evil inspirations which had withered the courage of its commander, abandoned the initiative, surrendered the main benefits of the splendid success achieved at the outset of the campaign, retreating before the enemy and taking up a defensive position. And such a defensive position! The new line was drawn through low and largely wooded ground, commanded here, enfiladed there, by the batteries which the advancing enemy were already establishing on the high ground which had been abandoned in obedience to the fatal orders. As Generals Couch, Meade, Sykes and Hancock sat on their horses, in a group, close behind the division of the last-named officer, General Meade, looking up the road, exclaimed, with great emphasis, "My God, if we can't hold the top of a hill, we certainly cannot hold the bottom of it!"

General Hooker, however, did not share the regret of his corps commanders and of General Warren, at the abandonment of the advanced position. To Couch, on reporting at headquarters, he said confidently, "It is all right, Couch, I have got Lee just where I want him. He must fight me on my own ground ;" and a little later he issued the following order :

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
CHANCELLORSVILLE, May 1, 1863, 4.20 P.M.

[CIRCULAR.]

Commanders of the Second, Fifth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Corps will at once have their commands established on the lines assigned them last night, and have them put in condition of defence, without delay of a moment. The Major-General Commanding trusts that a suspension in the attack to-day will embolden the enemy to attack him. All trains belonging to the commands will be drawn within the lines and parked in the rear.

By command of Major-General HOOKER.
WILLIAM L. CANDLER, *Captain, Aide-de-Camp.*

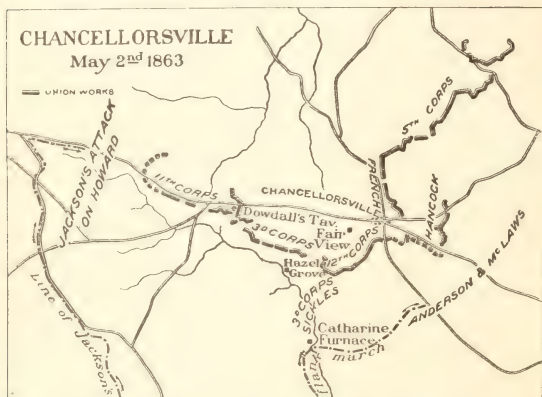
General Hooker was within twenty-four hours to learn what emboldening Lee and Jackson to attack him might imply. Little else needs to be told of the events of the first day. French's division, which had been advanced to Todd's Tavern, was brought back and placed at the Chandler House. Sickles' Third Corps was now all up and massed in rear of Chancellorsville. During the late afternoon and early evening there was artillery-firing all along the line, and sharp skirmishing took place on the front of the Twelfth Corps. The assistant adjutant-general of the corps, Lieutenant-Colonel Walker, was severely wounded.

THE SECOND DAY, SATURDAY, MAY 2D.

During the night of the 1st to the 2d of May considerable changes were made in the dispositions of the troops, with reference to the formation of an intrenched defensive line, in the unfortunate position to which Hooker had condemned himself. The left was to be held by Meade's Fifth Corps, extending southwesterly from Scott's Dam on the Rappahannock, his front covered by Mineral Spring Run. The Second Corps here took up the line—French on the left, with Hancock extending across the turnpike and connecting with Geary's division of the Twelfth Corps, not far from the plank road. On the right of Geary, and somewhat advanced, was Williams' division of the same corps, and beyond this the powerful corps of Sickles, while upon the extreme (left) lay the Eleventh Corps, under Howard, most dangerously "in the air." With Howard were two other Second Corps men—General Charles Devens, Jr., formerly colonel of the Fifteenth Massachusetts, and General

Francis C. Barlow, formerly colonel of the Sixty-first New York.

While thus the Third, Fifth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Corps, with two divisions of the Second, were disposed in order around Chancellorsville, Reynolds' First Corps had already been ordered up from the left, below Fredericksburg, and by nine o'clock in the morning he was on the road. Unfortunately his march was twice as long as



it would have been had Hooker made good his purpose of advancing on the 1st to uncover Banks' Ford.

Returning now, from this survey of the line, to the two divisions of the Second Corps, lying between Meade and Slocum, on the centre, we note that of the two, French's division occupied a position whose front was so far covered by fire from Hancock's and Meade's lines that the division might fairly be said to be in reserve. Hancock's position, however, was much exposed, and certain to be the scene of conflict should the enemy un-

dertake to assail Hooker from the direction of Fredericksburg. Hancock's troops were all in one line. A continuous trench furnished them cover. In front the woods were thoroughly slashed, while rifle-pits, constructed on the day previous by Sykes' troops, were utilized by posting therein a line of skirmishers, three paces apart, with strong reserves, all under the command of Colonel Miles, Sixty-first New York. In the main trench the disposition of troops was as follows: On the right, Colonel Cross, with the Fifth New Hampshire, Eighty-first Pennsylvania, and Eighty-eighth New York, which had come up with the ammunition train; next, General Caldwell, with the Sixty-sixth New York, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, and Sixty-first New York; next, Colonel Brooke, with the Second Delaware, One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania, Twenty-seventh Connecticut, Sixty-fourth New York, and Fifty-third Pennsylvania; next, General Zook, with the One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania and Fifty-seventh and Fifty-second New York. It will be observed that this disposition of the troops in a degree disregarded brigade organizations; General Meagher, with the Sixty-ninth and Sixty-third New York, Twenty-eighth Massachusetts, and One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania, was still absent on the duty to which he had been assigned on the 1st, on the road to Banks' Ford.

But Lee had no ambition to try the courage and endurance of his men in an assault on the left or centre of Hooker's position. The eagle eye of Jackson had discerned the true point of attack—namely, the right of the Eleventh Corps, which hung loose “in air,” with the dense woods of the “wilderness,” in front and around it, to mask the movements of an enemy, and with two or three miles of unguarded country between it and the river in

the rear.¹ Here was the true place for one of Stoneman's divisions of cavalry, now careering on a futile raid against Lee's communications.

With Jackson, to plan was to attempt, and at an early hour he was on his way, with twenty-six thousand men, marching clear across the whole front of the Union forces. That the Confederates were moving across our front, though seldom in sight, was perfectly clear to every intelligent soldier on the line. "The rattling volleys of musketry," says General Morgan, "occurring in succession from the extreme left to the right, indicated as plain as words could tell, the march of the flanking column."

It is not our task to repeat the story of the utter and crushing defeat which Jackson inflicted on the Eleventh Corps. The Second had been concerned in Jackson's movement only as the necessity of drawing off General Hooker's attention from his menaced right led to a continual pressure on Hancock's skirmish line, and to occasional sharp attacks which Miles threw off with ease. At last the crisis came, and Howard's brigades² were shattered like glass in the fearful shock.

"The stampede of the Eleventh Corps," says General Morgan, "was something curious and wonderful to behold. I have seen horses and cattle stampeded on the plains, blinded, apparently, by fright, rush over wagons, rocks,

¹ "So far as I can ascertain, only two companies of infantry were thrown out on picket (toward the west); and they were unsupported by grand guards, so that they did not detain the enemy a moment, and the rebels and our pickets came in together." Doubleday's Chancellorsville.

² This is said without any disparagement of the claim that some of Howard's troops behaved with great fortitude, all the more deserving of praise because of the general wreck around them.

streams, any obstacle in the way ; but never, before or since, saw I thousands of men actuated seemingly by the same unreasoning fear that takes possession of a herd of animals. As the crowd of fugitives swept by the Chancellor House, the greatest efforts were made to check them ; but those only stopped who were knocked down by the swords of staff officers or the sponge-staffs of Kirby's battery, which was drawn up across the road leading to the ford. Many of them ran right on down the turnpike toward Fredericksburg, through our line of battle and picket line, and into the enemy's line ! The only reply one could get to argument or entreaty was, ' *All ist veloren ; vere ist der pontoon ?*' "

Although the appearance of thousands of fugitives from battle, with ambulances, wagons, cannons, and caissons, all in a wild stampede, is apt to be very disconcerting and demoralizing to a line of battle, the troops of the Second Corps did not appear in the smallest degree affected. A great deal of chaffing was indulged in, and some practical jokes were even perpetrated on the fugitives, some of whom were actually roaring with fright ;¹ but not the slightest sign was given of sympathy with the cause of the unfortunates' distress. In part this was due to a feeling of contempt, doubtless undeserved, which had been generally entertained by the older corps of the Army of the Potomac toward the Eleventh Corps, ever since it came up in the rear after Fredericksburg. To

¹ I never saw an American so frightened as to lose his senses, though I have seen thousands of the natives of Columbia leave one battlefield or another in the most dastardly manner. But if an American is mean enough to abandon the line, it is always done coolly and collectedly. Indeed, he will exhibit a degree of engineering skill in getting out of a fight, under cover, which would do credit to a member of the topographical staff.

"fight mit Sigel" had so long been a current jest and proverb, that the troops were hardly disposed to do justice to the many excellent regiments which were incorporated in this command.

From the headquarters of the Second Corps, at this moment, could, with a glass, be seen several officers, on the top of a house by the side of the turnpike toward Fredericksburg, eagerly scanning the western view, to gather the first intimation of victory far away at Dowdall's Tavern. It is not unlikely that this was the staff of the officer commanding the Confederate forces along the pike. And as both sights and sounds brought plentiful evidence of the overwhelming success which had followed Jackson's flank movement, the efforts of the enemy to carry Hancock's skirmish line became more determined.

Again and again did he advance into the slashing, and attempt to make his way over Miles' resolute force;¹ but in vain. Occupying a position of advantage, the Fifty-seventh, Sixty-fourth, and Sixty-sixth New York, and detachments from the Fifty-second New York, Second Delaware, and One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, every time beat off these attacks, and drove the assailants back to cover. The importance of this stiff holding of our line on the left could not, at this crisis, be over-estimated. Had McLaws been able to produce any impression, however slight, along the turnpike, he would have fearfully complicated the problem for the Union army—called suddenly to face the irruption of Jackson's three divisions through its broken right, driving Howard's beaten troops before him as the stones and beams of a

¹ General Miles informs me that one Confederate colonel was killed while literally riding over his line of rifle-pits.

ruined dam, uprooted trees, and the wreckage of a hundred houses are driven before the mountainous flood of waters. Fortunately, most fortunately, while the good Third Corps, with which was William Hays' brigade of French's division of the Second, Pleasonton's small but gallant cavalry force, and the guns of numerous batteries were, with rare discipline and heroism, resisting this fearful onset, no cause for alarm existed upon the left; even the line of battle was never once permitted to become engaged; but Miles, holding the enemy off at arm's length, continued in his rifle-pits till night fell. Rightly does Mr. Swinton, in his history, say: "Amid much that is dastardly at Chancellorsville, the conduct of this young but gallant and skilful officer shines forth with a brilliant lustre." So delighted was Hancock at the splendid behavior of his skirmish line that, after one repulse of the enemy, he exclaimed, "Captain Parker, ride down and tell Colonel Miles he is worth his weight in gold;" while Couch, turning to the major-generals who commanded his two divisions, said, in his quiet but emphatic way, "I tell you what it is, gentlemen, I shall not be surprised to find myself, some day, serving under that young man." The remark was not more honorable to the boyish colonel to whom it related than to the senior corps commander of the Army of the Potomac who uttered it.

THE THIRD DAY, SUNDAY, MAY 3D.

The second day of Chancellorsville closed with a victory for the Confederates which was more moral than physical. Howard's Eleventh Corps¹ had, indeed, been put

¹ Except Barlow's brigade, which had been with Sickles on the 2d, and was intact.

hors de combat; but this corps had never been greatly depended upon in the plans of the commanding general. On the other hand, Reynolds' corps was now up on the right, which, throwing Howard's corps out of the account, gave Hooker still, at least seventy-one thousand men, at Chancellorsville, allowing for all losses. Lee's entire force was eighteen thousand less than this, and six brigades had to be withdrawn to watch Banks' Ford and to oppose Sedgwick and Gibbon. Moreover, Jackson, Lee's right arm, was lying mortally wounded by the fire of his own men, and A. P. Hill had also been wounded, though not fatally. But the same indecision, the same halting between two purposes, which had forfeited every advantage thus far offered by superiority of numbers, and by the success of the turning movement, was to rule the succeeding day. The next great mistake in series was the order to Sedgwick to carry the heights behind Fredericksburg, and to push into Lee's rear. Such an order should have been impossible. If that movement was to be attempted at all, Reynolds should not have been withdrawn. With Reynolds,¹ Sedgwick would have had more than forty thousand men, an army sufficient to at least defend itself against any force that could be despatched from Chancellorsville. Without Reynolds, Sedgwick had but twenty-five thousand—a detachment, not an army—a force far too large to be idle in such a crisis, but not too large to be beaten whenever Lee, temporarily letting go Hooker, should turn upon the venturesome column threatening his rear. With Sedgwick advanced as far as Salem church, the two columns would be not less than

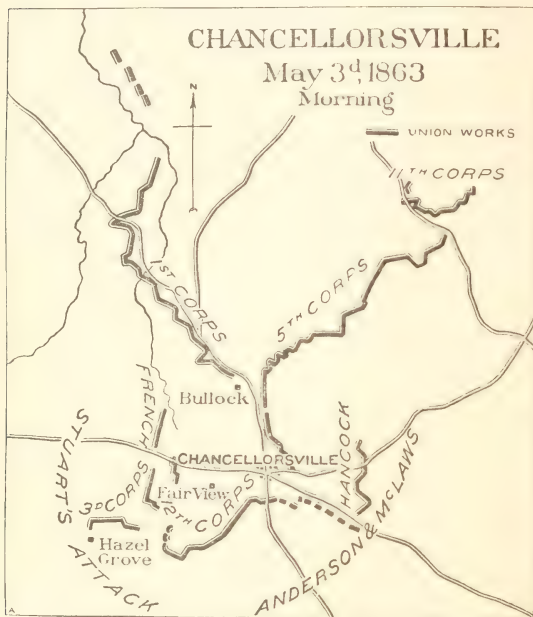
¹It is to be noted that Reynolds, although called away from Sedgwick at Fredericksburg, to whom his support would have been priceless, was not engaged in the action at Chancellorsville.

thirty marching miles apart, though only seven miles distant across country. Such a separation of the two wings of an army, with a vigilant, stubborn, and audacious enemy between them, never did, and never will, result in anything but disaster.

In preparation for the battle of the 3d of May, General Hooker contracted his lines, though as yet holding on to the Chancellor House. Hancock's division, facing east and southeast, still lay across the Fredericksburg turnpike. On Hancock's left so much of the Eleventh Corps as could be brought together after the disaster of the 2d, had been placed in position behind Mineral Spring Run. The proper front of the Union position, looking south, was held by Slocum's Twelfth Corps, with a portion of the Third Corps; while Sickles, with the remainder of the Third Corps and French's division from the Second, fronted west to meet the coming attack of J. E. B. Stuart, who had succeeded the wounded Jackson and Hill in the command of the greater part of Lee's forces present on the field. To the right and rear, covering the road to Ely's Ford, lay Reynolds' First Corps, which had made a march of twenty-four miles the day previous, to be present at the battle in which it was not destined to take a part. Meade's corps was also moved over from the left across the Bullock clearing, taking position near the road from Chancellorsville to United States Ford, in position especially to go into action on the Union right with Reynolds, but not too far away but that it could be marched back to support the Eleventh Corps.

The contraction of the lines, and the sharp returns to the rear from either end, presented the advantage of enabling the troops to reinforce any portion of the line by a brief march, and of bringing all at once under the eye

of the commander. Moreover, the ground on the flanks and in the rear, upon which the three corps of Howard, Meade, and Reynolds were placed, being now well known and the timber in front extensively slashed, a surprise



was impracticable. But that these possible advantages of the situation should be reaped, it was essential that there should be a commander; and, in melancholy truth, there was no longer a commander of the Army of the Potomac. Hooker's vital force had become, for the

time, exhausted ; and he had little left of the moral and physical stamina needed to carry him through the enormous, the hardly comprehensible responsibilities, anxieties, and labors which fall on the commander of a large army in the midst of critical operations.

The day now opening was to see one-half the forces at Chancellorsville beaten, after desperate fighting, under the very eye of their commander, while other corps lay under arms within rifle-range, without so much as an order being given to bring them up, or even to supply the front line with ammunition. The army engineers had during the night constructed a new line, about three-quarters of a mile farther to the rear, crossing the United States Ford road at the Bullock clearing ; and the idea of retreating to that line seems to have taken possession of General Hooker's mind, while yet he could neither bring himself to give the order to retire before the enemy should attack, nor to make the necessary arrangements for vigorously defending the positions then occupied. Indeed, a vague notion of resuming the initiative still so far lingered in his mind that a portion of Sickles' corps had, when day broke on the morning of the 3d of May, not been ordered back to the general line, but was obliged to fight its way back with considerable loss.

I have indicated the possible advantages of the position occupied, or intended to be occupied, on the morning of the 3d. The disadvantages were those which pertain to every compact order of battle. The formation of our troops presented angles, which are always a source of weakness ; while, owing to the shortness of the lines, and the consequently narrow space enclosed, there was allowed an enormous concentration of artillery against any and, by turns, every part of the intrenchments, while the whole ground between could be fairly scoured by the

enemy's fire. And here we meet the peculiar infelicity of the position of the third day at Chancellorsville, owing to the existence of that high ground on the left, toward Fredericksburg, which Hooker abandoned on the 1st, after it had been occupied by Sykes and Hancock. From this side the enemy had a plunging fire into every part of the enclosed space, and an enfilading fire along the main face of the works held by the Twelfth Corps. Nay, more, during the day now opening, Hancock's position was to be subjected to fire at once direct, enfilading, and reverse, receiving shot and shell from every direction except the north.

There was one redeeming feature in the position occupied by Hooker's troops at daybreak, viz., that on the southwest, Sickles, with Birney's division, occupied Hazel Grove, which is in fact no grove at all, the ridge being completely bare. The ground here is high, and would, if intrenched, have formed a kind of redoubt on that angle of the line, protruding so far as to prevent the junction of the Confederate forces operating against our right with those operating against the centre and left, and at the same time to maintain an enfilading fire against the Confederate batteries established by Stuart over against our right. It is true that the troops at Hazel Grove would have been in an uncomfortable place; but, so long as this was the key to the whole position, the hill should and could have been held by picked brigades amounting to five thousand men, with a powerful staff especially detailed for the purpose. Unfortunately, Hooker had directed the surrender of Hazel Grove, and unfortunately, also, since Hazel Grove was to be surrendered at all, he delayed the withdrawal of the troops until daybreak; so that Birney's rear brigade, that of Graham, while covering the withdrawal of the division, in the early morn-

ing, found itself attacked by the Confederate brigade of Archer. The struggle was fierce and sanguinary, though brief, for Hobart Ward's brigade, returning to the support of Graham, succeeded in extricating him without further loss than that of four guns left in the enemy's hands. Thus inauspiciously began the battle of Sunday: the Confederates were flushed by the thought of having carried by assault a position which the Union troops were purposely abandoning, while our own soldiers saw the day begin by a blunder and a disaster.¹ But this was not the worst, for Stuart, who, succeeding to Jackson, was commanding the whole Confederate left, while Lee in person directed operations upon the right, occupied the heights abandoned by Hooker with thirty pieces of artillery, thus gaining an advantage on the southwest of the Union line fully corresponding to that which the Confederates had enjoyed upon the east ever since the withdrawal on Friday afternoon.

And now, in the early morning, began the gigantic struggle. The Confederate commanders had no time to lose, for soon Sedgwick would be thundering on their rear at Marye's Heights. Upon Sickles' advanced line Stuart fell with fury. The attack was first upon Berry's division, which was on the right of the road leading down from Dowdall's Tavern, supported by General William Hays' brigade from French's division of the Second Corps. The fighting was stubborn in the last degree. More than once the Confederates, with all their rage, were driven back, and even colors and prisoners were taken, but the enemy returned to the charge.

¹ Hotchkiss and Allen, in their account of Chancellorsville, speak of the capture of Hazel Grove as if that position had been wrested from Sickles.

Hays' brigade was half surrounded in the dense thickets, and the brave commander was wounded and captured with some of his men. But in this critical moment, upon the right of Hays' small and shattered command appears the brigade of Carroll, which its spirited commander handles with a dexterity and audacity all his own. Three of his regiments are flung freely and boldly against the exposed left flank of the Confederates, which curls and breaks under the shock. Carroll not only takes three hundred prisoners with two colors, but recaptures a regiment of our people. Meanwhile Birney has thrown off the assaults upon his front, and for a moment Stuart's attack seems to have failed. But the Confederate reserves are brought forward. The brigades of Nicholls and Iverson, and a part of Rodes', form in support of that of Thomas, to check the advance of Carroll; while Berry is desperately assailed by troops that, for a time, even reach the plateau of Chancellorsville and take possession of the Union earthworks, only to be thrown out by a charge of the New Jersey brigade, under Mott.

French, reinforced by a brigade from Humphreys, the only one of the Fifth Corps which appears to have been this day engaged at Chancellorsville, is still pressing strongly on the Confederate left,¹ and the brigade of Colquitt has to be sent to its support. This reinforcement proves sufficient to check French's advance, while Berry shakes off a fresh assault upon his line; and for a while, upon the Union right, the combatants, exhausted

¹ "On the extreme left flank the federal troops now pushed the attack with renewed vigor; Iverson, though aided by a portion of Rodes' brigade, in addition to Nicholls' and Thomas', was severely pressed. Reinforcements were urgently demanded, and Colquitt's brigade was sent for and ordered up." Hotchkiss and Allen's Chancellorsville, p. 69.

by the fierce and bloody work and largely out of ammunition, rest upon their arms. Stuart has not another regiment to send. All this time, not a mile away, lay the seven brigades of Reynolds' First Corps, which had not yet fired a shot. Meade's fresh corps is also available, and but one word is needed to launch these thirty thousand men upon the left flank of the enemy, sweeping across the front of French and Berry. From the front and from the right Hooker is importuned for reinforcements, and for supplies of ammunition; but nothing is done—the gallant men of the Second, Third, and Twelfth Corps, whole brigades with empty cartridge-boxes, are left to their fate.

And now the main conflict is shifted toward the Union centre, where Whipple's division of the Third Corps and Geary's of the Twelfth are involved in a close and deadly struggle with the Confederate brigades of Doles, Ramseur, and Paxton, which, with astonishing courage, force their way up to the Union line, and even occupy a portion of the intrenchments, but are finally driven out, with fearful losses, and compelled to retire. While the battle has thus been raging along the Union centre and right, what has happened to Hancock?

We have seen that, on the left of the line, Howard's broken command has been stationed behind the formidable works erected on the first day by Meade's corps. The position which the Eleventh Corps occupies is one not likely to be seriously assailed, and in the condition of these troops they are hardly regarded even as reserves. The real left of the Union line, thus, so far as it is involved in the fighting of the day, is held by Hancock, covering both sides of the turnpike and extending toward the plank road. Along this line Colonel Miles has that morning been enacting the same important part which

we have seen him performing with so much credit on the 2d. So closely is Hancock's main line drawn in to Chancellorsville, that it is deemed to be of great moment that the Confederates be not allowed to reach it except in the last struggle. Already the enemy's artillery, from one hundred and eighty degrees of the circle, is directing a plunging fire upon the plain at Chancellorsville, the shells falling among the infantry and artillery reserves, knocking to pieces the ammunition trains in their park, and spreading confusion all around. It is plainly in the last degree unadvisable that a dropping musketry fire should be added to the causes of confusion and turmoil about the Chancellor House.

Hancock strengthens the skirmish line held by Miles, and instructs that officer not to yield one foot except upon actual necessity; and well is that trust discharged. The troops under Miles' command consist of the Sixty-first, Sixty-fourth, and Sixty-sixth New York, with detachments from the Fifty-third Pennsylvania, Second Delaware, One Hundred and Fortieth, One Hundred and Forty-fifth, and One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, and Twenty-seventh Connecticut. The troops in front of the Union left consist of seven brigades under McLaws and Anderson, under the personal direction of General Lee, who has placed himself on this end of his line, first, to give full scope to Stuart, whom he has intrusted with the command which has fallen from Jackson's dying hand, and, secondly, that he may himself be in place to receive, at the earliest moment, intelligence of Sedgwick's movements at Fredericksburg. Wofford's, Kershaw's, and Semmes' brigades of McLaws' division¹ confront Hancock, while the brigades of Ma-

¹ Barksdale's brigade being at Fredericksburg.

hone, Wright, Posey, and Perry of Anderson's division' are opposed to Geary's and a part of Williams' division of the Twelfth Corps.

All through the early morning, beginning at half past five o'clock, the Confederate commanders opposite our left had sought to distract the attention of General Hooker from Stuart's attacks, and to prevent the reinforcement of Sickles and French, by a series of brisk and audacious dashes at Hancock's line. Again and again did they send out clouds of skirmishers against our rifle-pits; again and again did their regiments come down into the slashing; every time they were met by the steady fire of our men, and driven back to cover. At last, after miraculously escaping injury through nearly four hours of constant exposure, the heroic young officer who had so long conducted this gallant defence was shot through the body and carried from the field, his bearers passing close by Couch and Hancock, who had with delight watched his splendid behavior throughout the morning, and now, with the deepest sorrow, looked down upon his manly young face, on which seemingly the dews of death were already gathering.

One-half of the story of Sunday's fight has been told. From half past five to about nine o'clock the battle had been raging, on the right and centre, with varying fortune. Prisoners and colors had been taken on both sides; long lines of battle had been whipped into foam by the fury of the storm; thousands upon thousands had fallen. As yet, however, the Union position remained substantially intact; and Stuart had been obliged to desist from his assaults, to give his men time to breathe, to re-form his regiments, and to bring up his few reserves.

¹ Wilcox's brigade being in the early morning at Banks' Ford, to be soon called to Salem Heights by Sedgwick's advance.

On the Union side, the formations had been somewhat shattered by the frequent changes of positions involved in meeting the shower of blows which had been dealt, and by the fearful losses inflicted, while the nerve of the troops had been greatly shaken by the defensive position in which they have been so long kept under an enfilading fire of artillery. Still there are no signs of breaking up; the regimental organizations are measurably preserved, and the stragglers are comparatively few. But the troops are now largely out of ammunition, both for infantry and for artillery; and repeated and urgent requests for fresh supplies sent back to army headquarters meet with no response, or with the impatient reply, "I can't *make* ammunition." Nor are any fresh troops seen advancing over the field to bring new spirit to the line, and to fill the woful gaps left by the conflicts of the morning. Not counting the Eleventh Corps, of which Barlow's brigade was intact, thirty to thirty-five thousand unbreathed soldiers in the First and Fifth Corps lie on their arms in rear and to the right of the battlefield. Appeals for reinforcements fall unheeded on the ear of the commanding general. Stunned by the disaster of the day before, he can think of but two things—Sedgwick, whom he has ordered to advance into Lee's rear, and the new line constructed by the engineers, although to retreat to this is to abandon the roads by which Sedgwick is to advance.

And now the moment of defeat approaches. Resolved to do or die, the decimated divisions of Stuart gather themselves together, close their ranks, and advance for the final assault. From every quarter the Confederate artillery opens a fearful fire over the plain, which fairly shrieks with the flying, plunging shells. The two wings of the Confederate army, separated since the hour when,

yesterday morning, Jackson set out on his great flank march, are reunited, as Perry on the left of Anderson and Archer on the right of Stuart join their brigades at Hazel Grove. Lee himself rides forward to greet the troops of Stuart's corps, and to animate them for the conflict. All along the line, from farthest right to farthest left, the Confederate host advances: McLaws and Anderson push hard upon Hancock and Geary; Heth, Rodes, and Colston renew their fierce assaults on Williams, Sickles, and French. They will not be denied. French is thrown back upon the left of Meade's Fifth Corps, which receives not, in this supreme crisis, one order to move. Berry's division is assailed on both flanks; many of the regiments have only the bayonet with which to meet the assault; the Third Maryland gives way on the right of Williams' division, and the Confederates, rushing in, fire down Berry's line; the heroic commander is killed; Mott, who should succeed, has himself been wounded. General Joseph W. Revere, of New Jersey, assumes command of the division and orders a retreat.¹ Sickles dashes forward to prevent this fatal error, but too late—the Confederates are in possession of the edge of the Chancellorsville plateau. The brigades from Whipple's and Birney's divisions supporting Berry are driven back.

While this disaster was befalling our right and centre, Anderson, after repeated efforts, has dislodged Geary, who had all the morning been subjected to a shocking enfilade from the Confederate artillery at Hazel Grove, and, pressing in here, has gained the line to the west of the plank road. From two sides the flushed Confeder-

¹ For this act General Revere was tried and dismissed the service.

ates, in hurrying masses, are pouring over the crest upon the plateau of Chancellorsville.

Yet the Union troops on the centre and right are not all in disorder. Even in retreat, Slocum and Sickles still keep many of their troops well in hand, and by great personal bravery and with perfect coolness cover the withdrawal and hold the victorious enemy at bay. General Birney leads in person a charge of Hayman's brigade, which extricates Graham, who, for the second time to-day, has been surrounded. One of Sickles' batteries, K of the Fourth United States, holds its post after all the infantry has passed to the rear, exchanging fire with the advancing enemy; and only when these are close upon his guns does the gallant commander, Seeley, condescend to retire, carrying along everything that might serve the enemy as a trophy, even to the harness from the slaughtered horses.

The field was lost. The centre and right had gone out, and the Confederates were swarming over the plain from the south and west and establishing their batteries on the crest they had just captured. But there still remained the divisions of Hancock and Geary, receiving fire at this time, of musketry and of artillery, from three-quarters of the circle. Hancock's division was no longer intact. Caldwell, with the Sixty-first, Fifty-second, and Fifty-seventh New York and four companies of the One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, had, at a sudden call, marched to the United States Ford road, with a view to the anticipated breaking through of the enemy from the right and rear. Meagher having previously been detached, Hancock was left with but eleven regiments out of eighteen.

Colonel Cross' command had once, during the morning, changed front and formed line of battle to meet the

troops of Anderson's division, then threatening to break through Geary's right, so that when the right and centre fell out, Hancock was in two lines of battle—one fronting west toward Gordonsville, the other, only a few hundred yards away, fronting east toward Fredericksburg. Only fourteen guns were at command, and of these but nine were in condition to be very effective. The nine mentioned—Pettit's six and three of Thomas' (C of the Fourth United States), under Lieutenant Donahue—were directed to fire up the turnpike; the remaining five, belonging to Lepine's Fifth Maine Battery, from the First Corps, had been taken possession of by General Couch, and placed in the peach-orchard behind the Chancellor House. Geary's division at this moment held the approach from the south along the plank road. All the other troops were gone; but this little army lingered on the field to cover the retreat.

The gallant bearing of these troops checked the progress of the enemy's infantry, who, fearfully punished in the great battle of the morning, in which they had lost nearly eight thousand killed and wounded, conceived that they had a new battle to fight; but the fire of the Confederate artillery had now become infernal. Lieutenant Donahue, in command of Thomas' three guns, was mortally wounded. Lepine's battery, in the peach-orchard, was almost instantly cut to pieces; every officer was killed or wounded, whereupon General Couch requested Lieutenant Kirby, of the First Artillery, to take command of the battery. Hardly had Kirby reached his new post when his horse was killed, and a few minutes later this most heroic and promising young officer fell mortally wounded.¹ And now a heavy infantry column

¹ Lieutenant Kirby, wounded on the 3d of May, died on the 28th. On the 23d President Lincoln had sent him a general's commis-

fell upon the front which General Geary had maintained with so much spirit across the plank road. Stubbornly the men of the Twelfth Corps resisted; but at last that part of the line, too, fell out, and Geary's command passed, in no disorderly column, down the road to the Bullock clearing, where the new position was being taken up. It was still of great importance to gain time; to hold the enemy at bay as long as possible, until the roads leading to the rear should be cleared of troops, and the broken and disordered brigades should be re-formed. This necessity pressed strongly upon General Couch, and nobly did he set himself to discharge the duty. His example was superb. Of slight stature, and usually of a simple and retiring demeanor, he became sublime as the passion of battle and the high-mounting sense of duty took complete possession of every power and faculty, every thought and feeling, every limb and nerve. His horse was killed; he was himself twice hit. Nobly, too, was he seconded by the chief of his First Division, whose horse was killed, and who was only able to secure a remount on an animal hardly large enough to allow the general's feet to clear the ground.

The Chancellorsville plateau was now a hell of fire—shot screaming over it from every direction but the northeast; the house itself in flames; yet Hancock's division, alone where seven divisions had been, stood in two lines of battle, back to back, east and west, while the fourteen guns held the enemy at bay on the south.

At last the word came that the First Division might withdraw. The long skirmish line, which had so nobly done its work all the morning and the day before, upon

sion in recognition of his brilliant abilities, undaunted courage, and faithful service.

the left, was quickly, and but for a blunder of one officer would have been cleanly, withdrawn.¹ The guns of Lepine's battery, which had lost all its officers, all its cannoneers, and all its horses, were drawn off by the hands of the men of the Fifty-third and One Hundred and Sixteenth and One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania; the wounded were removed from the burning house by Lieutenant W. P. Wilson, of General Hancock's staff, one of the bravest and coolest of men, with a detail from the Second Delaware; and then the heroic rear-guard fell slowly and steadily back toward the new line at the Chandler House. On the route General Hancock, with much pleasure, came upon General Meagher's regiments, which had been detached from him on the 1st, now in position in the right and rear of the peach-orchard; and, a little farther down the road, he found General Caldwell's command, which had been detached, as related, during the morning. The reunited division took post in the new line of defence. The movement was completed about eleven o'clock.

We now come to a feature in the battle of Chancellorsville which has been much misconceived and misrepresented. During the terrible fire of artillery which had preceded the last general assault of the enemy, General Hooker was thrown down and stunned by a cannon-ball

¹ This blunder had serious consequences, resulting in the capture of Colonel R. S. Bostwick with eight companies of the Twenty-seventh Connecticut, about two hundred and forty men. By an error in the direction given to this command, when retiring from the rifle-pits, where it had acquitted itself most creditably, the entire body was marched into the enemy's lines. Companies D and F, with detachments from the other companies, all under Captain Joseph R. Bradley, were at the time absent, with the regimental flag, and thus escaped capture.

striking a pillar of the Chancellor House, against which he was leaning. In the case of General Hooker's complete disability, the command of the Army of the Potomac would, by seniority, have devolved upon General Couch, as the ranking major-general present; and it has, by some writers, been asserted or assumed that the latter actually became the commander of the army, and responsible for what followed during the day. Even were this so, no responsibility would attach to General Couch for the disaster which occurred on the morning of the 3d of May, since no human power could then have brought Meade and Reynolds up in season to defeat the impending charge, or could have filled the empty cartridge-boxes of Slocum's and Sickles' men at the front. General Couch did not receive Hooker's message until a quarter to ten, and at ten o'clock the enemy were in possession of the whole right and centre of the Chancellorsville plateau. But even so, Couch was never in fact placed in command of the army; Hooker, recovering from his brief stupor, sent for Couch and gave him explicit orders to withdraw the troops on the plateau to the new line, and then himself rode off to the rear. Couch was in command as Hooker's executive officer, for this purpose only, and of these troops alone; no authority over Meade, Reynolds, or Howard was given to him, and had he used his power for any other purpose, Hooker would have treated him as a mutineer.

In their new lines, which covered the Bullock clearing, our troops were not attacked during the remainder of the day. Lee, gathering up his divisions, which had already suffered fearfully in carrying the plateau of Chancellorsville, was about to hurl them upon our troops, when he was checked by the news that Sedgwick, with his own corps, the Sixth, and Gibbon's division of the

Second, had taken the offensive—had captured Marye's Heights from Early's division, with colors, guns, and prisoners, and was on the march into his rear. To meet Sedgwick's advance was an imperative necessity, and Lee suspended his assault in order to countermarch the brigades of Mahone, Wofford, Kershaw, and Semmes, all under McLaws, to reinforce Wilcox, who had taken up a position confronting Sedgwick.

It does not come within our purpose to describe the severe battle of that afternoon at Salem church, which, after varying fortune, resulted in checking Sedgwick's movement and inflicting upon Brooks' division a very heavy loss.

On the 4th of May Hooker kept his army inactive, although urged to resume the offensive with the fresh corps of Meade and Reynolds and the soundest divisions remaining in the other corps, contenting himself with strengthening his position. The only affair of the day was a skirmish on the front of the Twelfth Corps, in which Major-General Whipple, commanding a division of the Third Corps, was killed. Sedgwick, meanwhile, confronted a strong Confederate force, while several brigades, under Early, which had been driven out of Fredericksburg on the 3d, returned and occupied the hills above the town, cutting off Sedgwick's communications with the former camps and with Gibbon's division, one brigade of which held the city while the other two were drawn up on the heights of Falmouth.

Hooker continuing inactive, Lee determined to deal first with Sedgwick; and, marching back the brigades of Posey, Wright, and Perry, he attacked Sedgwick with such severity as to induce that officer to retire, during the night following, across the bridge at Banks' Ford. Here, and on the day following, was seen the error of

intrusting the movement into Lee's rear, if it were to be made at all, to so small a force as was given to Sedgwick. Had Reynolds been left with Sedgwick, the latter would have been, for all offensive or defensive purposes, far more than twice as strong as with his own command.

Not only would Sedgwick and Reynolds, combined, almost certainly have beaten off the heaviest attack which Lee could have delivered, and have been able to continue their movement into the Confederate rear, but even if checked in their progress, and worsted in the encounter, they would have been abundantly strong to hold the high ground around Banks' Ford, a position which would have had great advantages for a renewal of offensive operations at any future time.

Now rid of Sedgwick, Lee recalled the divisions of McLaws and Anderson, and devoted the day of the 5th of May to preparations for a grand assault on the intrenched positions of the Union army in front of United States Ford. But when day dawned it was found that Hooker had recrossed the Rappahannock. In the council of war certain of the corps commanders, feeling that it was an inexpressible disgrace to retreat, beaten, while yet there were nearly thirty-five thousand men who had not fired a shot, voted against the recrossing; but the contrary opinion prevailed. Among those who voted to retreat was the commander of the Second Corps, whose observation of General Hooker, from the 1st to the 5th of May, had convinced him that no change of dispositions, and no accession of numbers, would serve to enable that officer to win a victory, in the condition of mind into which he had fallen; and that a renewal of the fighting would simply mean fresh disgrace and increased losses. And whenever, since that time, General

Couch's action on this matter has been challenged, he has always replied, "And I would do it again under such a commander."

For a time the crossing was interrupted by a sudden rise in the river, in the early evening of Tuesday, which swamped the approaches to the pontoons, so that men could neither come nor go; and Couch, who knew that Hooker had gone over to the other side, and couldn't get back, determined to take advantage of the situation to throw the whole force thus placed under his command upon the enemy as soon as day should dawn, to finally test the question, whether forty thousand Confederates were better than seventy thousand Union troops, relieved of the incubus which, for five days, had pressed them down. But it was not to be; the river soon began to fall, and the Army of the Potomac, foiled and humiliated, recrossed the Rappahannock and returned to its camps.

In killed and wounded, the losses of the two armies, during the operations from April 27th to May 6th, had been not far apart. One-half of the Union loss had fallen on the two corps of Sedgwick and Sickles, on the former of which had been imposed the difficult and dangerous duty of attacking Lee's rear; the latter of which had borne the brunt of the assault of Jackson and Stuart after the rout of the Eleventh Corps, and had, also, the most important part to perform in the terrible fighting of Sunday morning upon the Chancellorsville plateau.

The bulk of the losses of the Second Corps, amounting to 1,923, had fallen upon the well-tried First Division, under Hancock, whose killed, wounded, and missing reached 1,122. Gibbon's division, the Second, had been held in reserve by Sedgwick, or had been assigned to keep open his communications, and suffered very little. Few officers of rank had fallen. Brigadier-General Will-

iam Hays had been wounded and captured in the severe fighting on the right on Sunday morning; Colonel Nelson A. Miles had fallen desperately wounded, after a long and brilliant defence of the intrenched skirmish line toward Fredericksburg; Major Daniel Woodall, First Delaware, was wounded; Lieutenant-Colonel Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., Twentieth Massachusetts, was wounded in the advance of Gibbon's division from Fredericksburg.

The officers killed or mortally wounded were Major John W. Patton, One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania; Captain John C. Lynch, Sixty-third New York, Captain Byron P. Thrasher, One Hundred and Eighth New York; Captain Isaac R. Bronson, Fourteenth Connecticut; Lieutenant Joseph Pierson, Twelfth New Jersey; Lieutenant Edmund Kirby, First United States Artillery; Lieutenant Donoghue, Fourth United States Artillery; Lieutenant Francis M. Roberts (adjutant), Seventh West Virginia; Lieutenant Ephraim Jordan, First Delaware; Lieutenants William H. Bible and Francis Stephenson, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania; Lieutenant Charles Gibson, Fourteenth Indiana; Lieutenant John Springer, Twenty-fourth New Jersey; Lieutenant Joseph W. McEwen, One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania; Lieutenant Benjamin E. Kelly, First Rhode Island Artillery.

Among the changes of organization which followed the Battle of Chancellorsville was the breaking up of the division artillery, the creation of corps brigades of artillery, and the large increase of the artillery reserve of the Army of the Potomac. Under the new arrangement a Second Corps artillery brigade was constituted of batteries A and B, First Rhode Island; I, First United States; A, Fourth United States, under command of Captain John A. Hazzard, First Rhode Island Artillery.

The changes occurring among the field officers of the corps, during the month of May, are the honorable discharge of Major James Kavanagh, Sixty-ninth New York, and of Major Benjamin Ricketts, Second Delaware, and the resignation of Colonel George N. Morgan, First Minnesota. The latter was succeeded in the command of the regiment by Colonel William Colville. Captain R. D. Pettit, First New York Artillery, who had commanded Battery B with great distinction down to this time, resigned May 30th.

One of the results of the Chancellorsville campaign was a change in the command of the Second Corps. General Couch had felt outraged, in every nerve and fibre of his being, by the conduct of General Hooker from the 1st to the 5th of May; the retreat from the admirable offensive position reached alike by Sykes and Slocum, on the 1st, the inaction of the 2d, giving opportunity for the overthrow and rout of Howard's corps; the defective dispositions of Sunday morning; the refusal to support the hard-pressed divisions at the front; the failure to throw Meade and Reynolds upon the Confederate left; the defensive attitude of the day following, which allowed the isolated corps of Sedgwick to be overwhelmed, without support or relief.

Not that General Couch was alone in this feeling, which was shared by nearly all of the commanders of the army; but at once his nature as a man, and his position as the senior corps commander, made him peculiarly the spokesman in the representations and remonstrances addressed to General Hooker. During this painful period no man did less than he to spread discontent, none made fewer remarks to be heard by the staff or by subordinate commanders. The orders he received were executed with energy and despatch; and he even sought to find,

in the reckless exposure of his own life, relief from the terrible sense that his own troops and the other gallant corps around him were being aimlessly sacrificed. But to the commanding general he expressed his views with the utmost frankness and distinctness, and when consulted by President Lincoln,¹ on the 22d of May he advised that General Meade should be placed in command, stating that he himself would have the greatest pleasure in serving under that officer, though senior to him. To the suggestion of his own succession to the command General Couch returned a firm and sincere negative. Neither his health, always delicate, nor his feelings and wishes, would have been compatible with a position so exalted, so arduous and so responsible.

It is a matter of regret that General Couch did not, for a little while longer, possess his soul in patience. A few weeks more would have seen the army commanded by an officer in whom he had the utmost confidence, and under whom he would have delighted to march at the head of his own gallant corps. But the future was not foreseen: Hooker was already manœuvring with reference to a renewal of active hostilities; the Sixth Corps was already over the Rappahannock, threatening A. P. Hill's position; and General Couch had wrought himself into an almost morbid feeling that he could never again lead his gallant troops to what he regarded as purposeless slaughter; that he could not ask his brave brigades, the men he loved, and who trusted and obeyed him

¹ This was with the knowledge and approval of General Hooker. The report of the Congressional Committee on the Conduct of the War states that General Hooker "asked the President to ascertain the feelings of his corps and division commanders, and for that purpose he would request those officers to call upon the President whenever they applied for leave to come to Washington."

so cheerfully, to do that which he believed would be vain and useless.

In this spirit, with pain inexpressible, General Couch asked to be relieved from further service with the Army of the Potomac, and on the 10th of June left the Second Corps forever. A few days later, in recognition of his distinguished services, he was assigned to the command of the new Department of the Susquehanna, formed to resist the then threatening invasion of Pennsylvania. The Second Corps was to be singularly fortunate in its commanders, but it was never to know a truer or braver, one more full of the spirit of loyalty, courage, and honor. With General Couch went, of course, his personal staff, Major Burt, and Captains Schultze and Potter.

CHAPTER VIII.

HANCOCK—GETTYSBURG.

BY the retirement of General Couch the command of the Second Corps devolved upon Major-General Winfield S. Hancock. This already highly distinguished officer, a native of Pennsylvania, graduated from the Military Academy in 1844, receiving the brevet of Second Lieutenant in the Sixth Infantry. In 1847 he joined Scott's column in the Valley of Mexico, and took part, with great distinction, in the battles which immediately preceded the capture of the capital, being brevetted for gallantry at Contreras and Churubusco. In the attack upon Molino del Rey, Hancock was in the assaulting column, with Longstreet, Pickett, and Arnistead, men whom he was to encounter in another famous assault, sixteen years later. In 1855 Hancock was appointed captain and quartermaster. During the Seminole War he displayed a high order of ability in the conduct of the services of supply. He was subsequently on duty with General Harney in Kansas and in the Utah expedition of 1858. The outbreak of the war found him in charge of the quartermaster's depot at Los Angeles, California. At his own request he was ordered to the East, and, on the 23d of September, commissioned Brigadier-General of Volunteers. He went to the Peninsula at the head of a brigade of Smith's division, first of the Fourth and subsequently of the Sixth Army Corps. At Williamsburg



MAJ.-GEN. WINFIELD S. HANCOCK

Commanding Second Army Corps

JUNE 10, 1863 TO NOVEMBER 25, 1864

Hancock won the admiration of the army by his splendid conduct in the repulse of Early's brigade upon the Union right. His command was not engaged at Fair Oaks ; but during the Seven Days' battles it rendered important services, first in maintaining the position at Garnett's and Golding's farms, and afterward at Savage Station and White Oak Swamp. It has already been related how, in the very heat of action at Antietam, Hancock was summoned from the Sixth Corps to take command of the First Division of the Second Corps, at the head of which Richardson had fallen ; and how at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville he had led Sumner's old division with courage and address never surpassed upon any battlefield. His commission as Major-General of Volunteers bore date November 29, 1862.

General Hancock's accession to the conduct of the corps came upon the eve of great events. Scarcely had he issued his order assuming command, when the Second Corps was upon the march northward. The Confederate commander, taking advantage of the terrible shocks and losses sustained by the Army of the Potomac in the actions of December and May, and of its still further depletion through the expiry of the "two years" (New York) and the "nine months" enlistments, had already, under cover of the mountain wall of the Blue Ridge, begun the invasion of Maryland and Pennsylvania. In the execution of this great design Ewell, who had succeeded to the command of Jackson's corps, took the lead, followed by Longstreet ; while A. P. Hill remained at Fredericksburg confronting the Army of the Potomac.

Before the authorities at Washington came fully to the appreciation of Lee's purposes, Milroy had been crushed at Winchester, and the invasion had begun. Not, however, without arousing the Army of the Potomac. Gen-

eral Hooker had early become conscious of the enemy's movements, and finding that Lee was extending his forces northward, over a distance of nearly one hundred miles, he sought permission to attack him in flank, in the hope of either cutting off Hill or compelling the return of the adventurous Ewell. Forbidden by the administration to take this step, Hooker had no resource but to retire from his position at Fredericksburg, and move rapidly northward, keeping between the enemy and Washington.

The story of that long march, and of the desperate battle in which it culminated, is too well known to require a detailed recital. It will only be needful to describe the part taken by the Second Corps. On the 15th of June the corps, acting as rear-guard, moved to Stafford Court House, which was found in flames, having been fired by stragglers from the preceding column. Resting here only two or three hours, General Hancock pushed on as far as Acquia Creek, where the troops halted for the night. The day had been intensely hot, and the march through the dusty road proved most fatiguing to the men, hundreds of whom fell out. Numerous cases of sunstroke occurred and all the ambulances of the corps were brought into service, at the rear of the column, to bring forward those who could not keep up. About midnight the bivouac of the Second Division was rudely disturbed by hideous outcries, followed by the noise of men rushing hither and thither among frightened mules and horses. Headquarters turned out in dire alarm, and the soldiers, waked suddenly from the deep slumber that follows a painful march, seized their arms. The coolest believed that a band of guerillas, hanging upon the flanks of the column, had taken advantage of the darkness to dash among the sleeping troops. At last it

turned out that all the fright sprang from a soldier being seized with a nightmare, from which he waked screaming.

On the 16th the march was resumed, and proved, like that of the previous day, one of great fatigue, not a few of the men falling by the way, sunstruck. The corps moved through Dumfries to Wolf Run Shoals, on the Occoquan, where the jaded troops had an opportunity to refresh themselves by bathing in the running water. On the 17th the command reached Sangster's Station, where it remained over the 19th. On the 20th Centreville was reached. On the 21st the corps moved to Thoroughfare Gap, passing directly over the battlefield of Bull Run.

On the morning of the 25th the corps moved from Thoroughfare Gap toward Edwards' Ferry, on the Potomac. It chanced that, just as the corps was withdrawing from the Gap, the Confederate cavalry, under General Stuart, were passing through New Baltimore toward Gainesville, upon that raid which was destined to cause to Lee the loss of nearly his whole cavalry force throughout the highly critical movement he was conducting. At the little town of Haymarket, where Hancock's line of march turned to the north, Stuart opened fire upon our rear division, the Second, killing or wounding several men. Still further annoyance was caused by this unexpected appearance of the Confederate cavalry, inasmuch as Zook's brigade of the First Division, which was at Gainesville, was temporarily cut off from communication with the rest of the corps, and several messengers passing between Hancock and Zook were captured, among them Captain Johnson of the Sixth New York Cavalry, the commander of the corps headquarters' escort.

At nightfall the corps went into bivouac at Gum Springs, in the midst of a drenching rain. Here joined,

for the first time, a body of troops destined to bear a conspicuous share in all the future labors and dangers of the Second Corps, from the fast-approaching conflict on the bloody slopes of Gettysburg to the final triumph of April, 1865. This was the brigade commanded by the dashing Alexander Hays. General Hays had been colonel of the Sixty-third Pennsylvania Volunteers, and, as such, had greatly distinguished himself on the Peninsula.

The brigade consisted of four New York regiments—the Thirty-ninth, Major Hugo Hildebrandt; the One Hundred and Eleventh, Colonel Clinton D. McDougall; the One Hundred and Twenty-fifth, Colonel G. S. Willard; the One Hundred and Twenty-sixth, Colonel Eliakim Sherrill. It had formed a part of the force captured at Harper's Ferry during the Antietam campaign of the preceding year. On joining the Second Corps, General Hays took command of the Third Division, the conduct of his brigade devolving upon Colonel Willard.

While thus reinforced by the arrival of four New York regiments, the corps had, during the month then passing, been reduced by the expiry of the term of enlistment of another two years' regiment from that State—the Thirty-fourth, one of the original regiments of Sedgwick's division, which we have seen fighting gallantly, and with severe losses, at Fair Oaks, Antietam, and on other fields. With the regiment were mustered out Colonel Byron Laflin, Lieutenant-Colonel John Beverly, and Major Wells Sponable. An important incident, affecting the *personnel* of the corps, occurred on leaving Thoroughfare Gap. General J. T. Owen having been placed in arrest by General Gibbon, Brigadier-General Alexander S. Webb, who had just received his volunteer appointment, after long and honorable artillery and staff service, as an officer of the regular army, and had but that day arrived

at the front, seeking an assignment for the impending battle, was seized upon by General Hancock, "because he knew the man," and put in command of the Philadelphia brigade, with consequences of great moment to the Second Corps and to the Army of the Potomac.

On the 26th the corps crossed the Potomac at Edwards' Ferry, near the scene of the battle of Ball's Bluff. On the 28th it reached Monocacy Junction, near Frederick. Here was received the important intelligence that the command of the Army of the Potomac, that football of political intrigue and popular clamor, had undergone another change. General Hooker, after sharply protesting against the fatuous occupation of Harper's Ferry by a large force under General French, had tendered his resignation. Not only was Hooker right in his demand for the evacuation of Harper's Ferry, but it is in justice to be said that he had not, from the moment when he broke up his camps on the Rappahannock, on the 13th of June, failed to display at any point all the intelligence, energy, and composure required of a commander at a critical period.

It is a dangerous thing to make a change in the command of an army on the eve of battle, that is, as President Lincoln expressed it, to "swap horses while swimming the stream." But the Army of the Potomac was fortunate that its new commander was one who had served in it from the beginning; who, on the one hand, was thoroughly acquainted with its history and *personnel*, and whom, on the other, that army had learned to know and to trust. General Meade, an officer of engineers in the old army, had been one of the brigade commanders of the Pennsylvania Reserves upon the Peninsula; had led the Third Division of the First Corps under Hooker at Antietam and at Fredericksburg under Reynolds, and had commanded the Fifth Corps at Chancellorsville.

He was an officer of distinguished presence, of scholarly habits, of fiery, but disciplined courage.

The very next morning after that on which he assumed the command, General Meade put his columns in motion, to cause Lee to let go his grasp upon the flourishing cities of central Pennsylvania, against which several raiding columns had been directed. On the morning of the 29th the Second Corps was to proceed to Uniontown.

It is an incident very instructive as to the causes which may influence, or even decide, the fortunes of war, that the order directing the movement of the Second Corps was brought to the headquarters by an orderly who left it on the desk of the assistant adjutant-general, without calling attention to its presence, or demanding the customary acknowledgment of delivery. In consequence, corps headquarters remained unaware of the order until some time after the troops should have been on the road. The loss thus occasioned was severely felt in the tremendous exertions which the corps was that day called to make.

The troops moved by way of Uniontown, the advance reaching a point two miles beyond that place, upon the the Westminster road, about ten o'clock at night, the corps having accomplished the remarkable march of thirty-two miles, moving upon a single road with artillery and trains. At Uniontown the reception of the troops by the inhabitants was cordial and inspiring. Refreshment was freely offered at the gates and porches, and kind words and good cheer lifted the hearts of the weary soldiers, crowding onward to the greatest battle of the great war. During the 30th the corps remained in camp, little recking what a day was to bring forth. At daylight of the memorable 1st of July, an order was received to move forward to Taneytown. "Some fatal-

ity," remarks General Morgan, in his narrative, "seemed to attend our despatches at this important juncture. This one was written on the common tissue-paper, and was accompanied by another, demanding the exercise of the greatest caution by corps commanders to prevent the loss of despatches. After reading the order of march I stepped into the quartermaster's office, to give some instructions concerning the train, and when I returned to my tent after a minute's absence the despatch had vanished. My colored servant was in the tent, packing my bedding, but had seen nothing of it; and search was of no avail, till I happened to notice a yellowish mark around the sole of the African's boot, and bidding him hold up his foot, found enough tissue paper to satisfy me that he had knocked the despatch off the table into the wet grass and had then trodden it under foot until it had almost entirely disappeared. I remembered enough of it to enable the general to direct the march of the corps to Taneytown; and, to atone for any carelessness that might be attributed to me, set off without my breakfast for army headquarters, ten miles distant, for a copy of the despatch.

"The corps," continues General Morgan, "reached Taneytown about noon, and prepared to go into camp. Having lost my breakfast, I thought I would get dinner at the hotel in Taneytown, but, while taking the first mouthful, was summoned to headquarters, where I found General Hancock preparing to go to Gettysburg." The news that thus cost Morgan his dinner, following the loss of his breakfast, was indeed great news. As Meade had pushed forward the seven small corps under his command, trying to find, amid the fiery cloud of Southern raiders, the real nucleus of Lee's army, his left column, consisting of the First Corps, Reynolds, and the Eleventh Corps, Howard, under the general command

of the former, suddenly encountered the Confederate column which had, in ignorance of Meade's movements, been directed southward upon the town of Gettysburg. The shock was equally unexpected to both armies. After a temporary success, which cost the life of the heroic Reynolds, the two Union corps had been overborne by superior numbers, and forced back through Gettysburg, with great slaughter and the loss of nearly five thousand men captured.

This was the news, uncertain as yet, vague and terrible, which had brought Meade to Hancock's quarters at Taneytown. Inasmuch as what followed has been made the subject of controversy, General Morgan's account of the interview is given in his own words. "Generals Meade and Butterfield were both present. It was not then known whether General Reynolds was dead or not, and General Hancock's order was conditional, to assume command only in case General Reynolds was wounded. General Meade's attention was called to the fact that General Howard, commanding the Eleventh Corps, was senior to General Hancock, to which he replied, in effect, that he could not help it; that he knew General Hancock, but did not know General Howard so well, and at this crisis he must have a man he knew and could trust."¹

¹ The following is the text of General Meade's order as received by General Hancock. It differs slightly from the copies of that order presented to the Committee on the Conduct of the War, by Generals Meade and Butterfield :

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
July 1, 1863, 1.10 P.M.

COMMANDING OFFICER, SECOND CORPS :

The Major-General Commanding has just been informed that General Reynolds has been killed or badly wounded. He directs

Hot was the haste in which a soldier like Hancock would proceed in an exigency such as existed on the afternoon of the 1st of July, 1863. At once he was on the road, in an ambulance, driven at top speed, his horse following, led by an orderly, while he and Morgan studied the imperfect map of the country, the best which the commander-in-chief had been able to furnish. General Meade's intention was not yet formed to fight a battle at Gettysburg. When the encounter of the morning occurred he had the rather been inclined to establish a line on Pipe Creek. But meanwhile Hancock was to go forward and extricate the imperilled First and Eleventh Corps, taking command, also, of the Third, so soon as it should arrive from Emmettsburg. With those troops he was to dispute the progress of the enemy, and he was also to examine the ground to ascertain whether it could be considered a suitable one for defence, in which case the remaining corps of the army would be directed on Gettysburg.

Fast as the ambulance rolled over the good northern road, it could not keep up with Hancock's impatient mind, and soon the led horses were brought up, and the chief was galloping to the front, where, at any time, anything might happen. Only those who have been in such a case know how long a road can be. At the distance of

that you turn over the command of your corps to General Gibbon ; that you proceed to the front, and by virtue of this order, in case of the truth of General Reynolds' death, you assume command of the corps there assembled, viz., the Eleventh, First, and Third at Emmettsburg. If you think the ground and position there a better one on which to fight a battle, under existing circumstances, you will so advise the General and he will order all the troops up. You know the General's views, and General Warren, who is fully aware of them, has gone out to see General Reynolds.

about four miles from Gettysburg an ambulance was encountered, escorted by a single officer. One word told that it contained the body of General Reynolds, borne from his last battlefield. A deep silence fell upon the staff, and not a word was spoken till, at half-past three o'clock, the panorama of Gettysburg lay unrolled before them.

Beautiful as that landscape is in the eyes of the tourist, it was, that afternoon, a scene of terror, strewn with the dead and dying and the wreck of battle. Even more painful for a soldier to witness, were the disordered groups of fugitives hurrying from the field or skulking behind cover. Down the Baltimore road, to the rear, poured a broad tumultuous stream of panic-stricken men, mingled with caissons, led horses, ammunition wagons, and ambulances loaded with the wounded. Here and there, in small groups, the men of sterner stuff from out the Eleventh Corps clung sullenly to their colors, and gazed downward upon the serried masses of the Confederates, who, occupying the field of the recent battle, were threatening a fresh advance. On the left the remnants of the shattered First Corps were forming along Cemetery Ridge, under cover of Buford's brigades of cavalry, which, drawn up in a line of battalions in mass, stood as steady as if on parade.¹ Of the sixteen thousand men who had gone into battle in front of Gettysburg that morning, scarcely five thousand remained with their

¹ When last it was my privilege to see General Hancock, in November, 1885, he pointed out to me from Cemetery Hill the position occupied by Buford at this critical juncture, and assured me that, among the most inspiring sights of his military career was the splendid spectacle of that gallant cavalry, as it stood there unshaken and undaunted, in the face of the advancing Confederate infantry.

colors. Of the six infantry divisions, but one brigade remained intact. This was the brigade of Colonel Orlando Smith, of Steinwehr's division of the Eleventh Corps, which General Howard, when hurrying to the support of Reynolds, beyond the town, had stationed upon Cemetery Hill.

Upon this field of wreck and disorder now appeared Hancock. And as the sun shining through a rift in the clouds may change a scene of gloom to one of beauty, so did the coming of this prince of soldiers bring fresh life and courage to the disheartened bands which were halting uncertainly upon the new line of defence. At his call the braver spirits flamed to their height; the weaker souls yielded gladly to the impulse of that powerful, aggressive, resolute nature. At once the doubtful halt on Cemetery Hill was transformed into the confident assumption of a new line of battle; the fearful stream down the Baltimore road was peremptorily stopped. Shattered regiments as they reached the hills were halted and re-formed. On every hand men began to seek their regiments with alacrity; commanders rectified their lines and prepared for whatever might happen; ammunition was brought up; a part of Wadsworth's division, with the Fifth Maine Battery, was despatched to occupy Culp's Hill; skirmishers were thrown out on the front and right; at all points, commanding positions were occupied with the bravest show of force that could be made, with a view to deterring the enemy from attacking until the reinforcements, now rapidly approaching the field, should arrive. At half-past four Hancock despatched Major Mitchell, of his staff, with word to General Meade that Gettysburg offered a suitable position for defence, although somewhat exposed to be turned by the left.

Among the officers of the First Corps remaining on

the field, Morgan's narrative mentions General Wadsworth as conspicuous for his undaunted spirit and his eagerness to renew the fight. General Warren, afterward the illustrious commander of the Fifth Corps, at this time chief-engineer of the Army of the Potomac, was upon the field and rendered invaluable services.

An hour sufficed to work a great change within the Union lines; a greater change still, as seen from the enemy's ground. General Lee, now present in person, hesitated to give the order to attack positions naturally strong, which suddenly appeared to have been occupied by fresh troops; his instructions to Ewell to feel the Union right, but not to bring on a general engagement, were of so doubtful a nature as to produce no result. That delay saved the field of Gettysburg.

At half-past five o'clock Geary's division of the Twelfth Corps arrived upon the ground. This Hancock directed to extend our line southward toward the Round Tops. The remainder of the Twelfth Corps coming up, General Hancock relinquished the command to General Slocum, his senior, and rode away to confer with General Meade. About three miles from the field Hancock met his own corps, under General Gibbon, which he halted at that point, that it might be available against any movement to turn our left flank which should be attempted during the night. Shortly before dark the Third Corps, under Sickles, arrived upon the ground. So darkness came on without a serious attempt of the Confederates to carry the position. On those memorable heights the soldiers of the First and Eleventh Corps, of the Third and Twelfth Corps, the former worn with battle, the latter with long and hurried marches, lay down to get such rest as they could for the toil and dangers of the morrow. To them the hours seemed all too short; while to their comrades

of the Fifth and Sixth Corps, who, in ghostly columns, were all night pressing forward in an unstaying march, those hours seemed interminable.

THE SECOND DAY.

The morning of the 2d of July found General Lee possessing the advantage of superior concentration, Pickett's division and Law's brigade, only, being absent from the muster, as well as the still greater advantage derived from the prestige of the victory of the preceding day. On the Union side the Second Corps was easily brought upon the ground early in the morning; but the Fifth Corps and two brigades of the Third were still on the march, while the Sixth Corps, the strongest of all, could not possibly be brought in before the afternoon, having thirty-six miles to compass in its hurried return from Manchester.

It is now time to speak of the field of battle.

The town of Gettysburg lies between two streams, Rock Creek and Willoughby Run, the former much the more important of the two, which here run nearly south, and are, therefore, nearly parallel, at a distance, say, of about two and a half miles. Between the two streams run three ridges, again almost due north and south, and again, therefore, nearly parallel.

One of them, having the least north and south extent, the least elevation, and the least clear definition, forms the eastern border of Willoughby Run, on which had begun the battle of the early morning. The second runs just through the western outskirts of the town of Gettysburg, deriving its name, "Seminary Ridge," from the Lutheran Theological Seminary situated upon it. On this ridge the Confederates had taken up their position

with reference to the coming battle. The third ridge, that occupied by the Union forces, would, if prolonged northward, run through the eastern outskirts of Gettysburg; but, instead of this, that ridge is, just as it would strike the town, bent sharply around and curved backward till the banks of Rock Creek, upon the east, are reached. The elevation of this ridge varies greatly throughout its course, which we will briefly define, from south to north.

At the extreme south, as shown on our map, lies, distant perhaps three miles from the centre of Gettysburg, a sharp, rocky, and densely wooded peak, known as Round Top.

From Round Top the ground falls off toward the north, to rise again in Little Round Top. From Little Round Top the ridge continues, clearly defined, a little way, when it falls away to the general level of the plain, and the natural line of battle is thereby obscured for half a mile or more, when the north and south ridge again distinctly appears, here known as Cemetery Ridge, rising to a greater and greater elevation as Gettysburg is approached, where, as it curves around and is bent backward, it forms an uncommonly strong defensive position. At the point where the backward curve is taken the ridge is known as Cemetery Hill, because of the village cemetery which had been placed upon it. From Cemetery Hill the ridge, now twisted around to run south-east, falls off sharply for a short space, to rise again into a rocky, wooded eminence known as Culp's Hill, with an abrupt eastward face. This hill forms the natural right of any line of battle occupying this general position. The Rock Creek flows along the foot of Culp's Hill, on the east, and finally passes between it and another rocky and wooded eminence known as Wolf's Hill, too far to



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the rear to have much military importance in the conflict now impending.

Let us now consider the highways that traverse the field. From the southeast enters the Baltimore turnpike. Crossing Rock Creek beyond Wolf Hill, and running along the western base of Culp's, it rises somewhat sharply to surmount Cemetery Hill, whence it descends as rapidly to enter the town of Gettysburg, from which roads go northeast to York and Harrisburg, north to Carlisle, northwest to Chambersburg, west and slightly southwest to Fairfield. It is in this remarkable concentration of roads from the north, northwest, and northeast that we find the reason for General Lee's determination to seize and hold Gettysburg at all hazards. While thus the Baltimore turnpike comes in from the southeast, under cover of the shorter part of the natural line of defence which we have described (that part which has popularly been compared to the curved and barbed part of a fish-hook), the Taneytown road comes up directly from the south, under cover of the other and the longer part of that line, the part which had been compared to the shaft of the fish-hook.

One more road, that to Emmettsburg, remains to be spoken of. I have said that the field of battle is covered by three ridges, running generally north and south; we have now to note that between the Union line on Cemetery Ridge, and the Confederate line on Seminary Ridge, the ground rose into a subordinate ridge, low but broad, which traversed the field obliquely from one main ridge to the other. Along this fourth subordinate ridge ran the Emmettsburg Road, which, leaving the Union centre at the foot of Cemetery Hill, diverged rapidly, crossing the field between the two armies, and entered into the Confederate line, opposite the Union left. This

subordinate ridge is of the highest importance in the history of the second day at Gettysburg.

On the morning of July 2d the troops were disposed with reference to an anticipated attack from General Lee, at an early hour, as follows: General Slocum was in command of the right wing, which consisted of the Twelfth, Eleventh, and First Corps, occupying Culp's Hill on the extreme right and Cemetery Hill on the right centre. General Hancock's corps was designated to occupy Cemetery Ridge, forming the left centre. The Third Corps, under General Sickles, was to hold the left. It was General Meade's intention that this Corps should be stretched out toward the Round Tops.

These dispositions gave to the centre and left, as it proved, an inadequate force, owing to the conviction of General Meade that the enemy would make his first attack on Cemetery Hill. But weak as was the left, it was still further weakened by an advance made by General Sickles in the early afternoon, by which he abandoned the line drawn from Cemetery Ridge toward little Round Top; and threw his corps forward to the Emmettsburg road. This was done without notification to General Hancock, so that a gap of some hundreds of yards appeared between the right of the Third Corps and the left of the Second. Moreover, the advance of General Sickles to the Emmettsburg road, which ran, as stated, obliquely across the field toward the enemy's position, not only brought the Third Corps into a very advanced position, but left its flank "in air," offered to the enemy's blows. To remedy this defect General Sickles resorted to the next most dangerous device in warfare, namely, the formation of an angle, both lines of which were subject to an enfilading fire. Extending Humphreys' division and a portion of Birney's along the Emmettsburg

road to that peach-orchard which was so soon to become forever memorable, he "re-fused" the rest of his line, comprising the brigades of De Trobriand and Ward, forming them on a line drawn from the peach-orchard backward, southwesterly, to rest on the Devil's Den, a wild rocky gorge, of highly singular formation, which lies in front of Little Round Top.

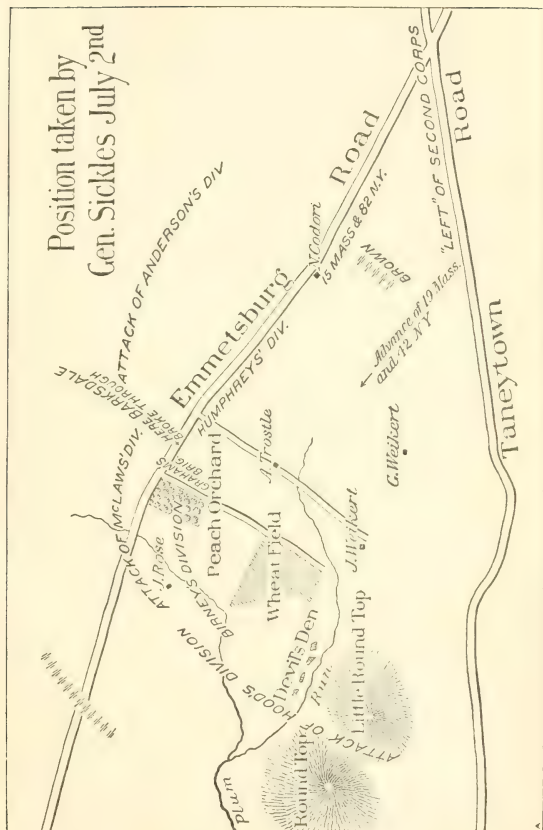
As this movement of General Sickles led to momentous consequences, it has become the subject of much controversy. General Sickles has recently put forward a defence of his action. It is certain that Generals Meade Sedgwick, Hancock, Warren, and nearly every other officer of distinction, deemed this step unjustifiable at the time, and disastrous in its results. General Sickles alleges that he had not as many troops to hold the left as should have been given him. But the smaller General Sickles' force, the stronger would seem to be the reasons against doubling, as he did, the length of the line he was to hold. General Sickles further says that the Round Tops formed the key of the position at Gettysburg; that General Meade had neglected to occupy them, and that his movement was to cover and protect that position. But General Sickles did not, in his movement, cover either of the Round Tops, his line ceasing at the Devil's Den; so that when the enemy, outflanking Ward and De Trobriand, began to swarm up the slopes of Little Round Top, it was not troops of the Third Corps, but troops of the Fifth, coming up from the Baltimore pike, which they encountered. Again, the commander of the Third Corps alleges that the ground he was asked to occupy, on the extension of Cemetery Ridge toward Little Round Top, was low and untenable, and that the position to which he advanced was strong and commanding. It is true that for half or three-quarters of a mile the line as-

signed to General Sickles was not a good one. It will happen, in battle, that, in order to hold the best line for the whole army, some one body of troops may be required to take a position not in itself desirable. The forces which disposed the surface of the earth have generally so acted as to produce few lines of battle which have not a weak point. In occupying a position, an army must take the bad with the good, the weak with the strong. The general line from Culp's Hill, across Cemetery Hill down Cemetery Ridge to Little Round Top, was, on the whole, a very strong one. It had one weak point, as described. Here the ground over which ran the Emmettsburg road was preferable; but General Sickles' attempt to piece out one line with the other, and to combine the strong points of both, proved futile and disastrous.

The following map shows the relation of the position taken by General Sickles to that which he was intended to occupy.

The morning of July 2d had passed, to the amazement of all in the Union ranks, without any aggressive movement on the part of General Lee, notwithstanding the strong reasons which prompted him to take an early initiative. Only one additional brigade, that of Law, came up on the Confederate side during this day, while on the Union side the Fifth Corps was already close to the field of the battle, and the Sixth Corps, toiling patiently along on its unbroken march of thirty hours, might be expected on the ground before the sun should set. Yet hour after hour was allowed to go by without a sign of activity among the Confederate forces, as seen from our lines.

At last, just at the moment when General Meade learned of the advance of Sickles' command, the divisions of Hood and McLaws, of Longstreet's corps, began



their long-meditated attack against the Union left, for it was here, and not upon Culp's or Cemetery Hill, that the Confederate commander had determined to deliver his blow. Lee's plan was, by extending his line, to outflank that portion of Sickles' force which might be found to have been drawn backward from the peach-orchard toward Round Top, or else by sheer force to break through that line, and thereupon to sweep down the Emmettsburg road, taking that portion of Sickles' line "on end," and rolling it up until the victorious troops should come opposite the Confederate centre, where Hill's corps—Anderson's division first, and then Pender's—should be thrown forward to join in the accumulating assault, either to carry Cemetery Ridge from the south and southwest, or to move directly into the Union rear. To Hood was intrusted the outflanking or breaking in of that portion of the Union line which might be found drawn back from the peach-orchard toward Round Top; to McLaws the attack on the angle at the peach-orchard, and the movement adown the Emmettsburg road against Humphreys' division.

As Hood, after the long delay involved in getting so formidable a force into position, while moving them out of sight of the Union signal parties, came against that portion of the Union line which was "re-fused," he found it in unexpected force. Here were the brigades of De Trobriand and Ward; and though the great length of the line to be held had drawn them out perilously thin, well did the old division of Kearney acquit itself that day. But though the line of De Trobriand and Ward resisted stubbornly, it could easily be outflanked, since its extreme left extended only to the Devil's Den; and soon the brigade of Law and two regiments of Robertson's Texans, parting from the rest of Hood's division,

the commander of which had already fallen severely wounded, passed around the extreme left of Sickles, around the Devil's Den, and directed their movement against Little Round Top.

The position of Little Round Top, not less important upon the left than Cemetery Hill upon the centre, or Culp's Hill upon the right, had been strangely neglected ever since Geary, sent thither by Hancock upon his first arrival on the field, had been withdrawn to join the Twelfth Corps at Culp's. The vast extension involved in Sickles' advance had left no troops available to occupy the hill, and thousands of Confederates, fierce and eager, were advancing to seize it, while defended solely by a signal officer and his two assistants. No, not by these alone. One other was there—a slender, graceful young officer of engineers, Warren, who had climbed the slope to scan the western horizon, where his prescient mind had descried the signs of danger. Perceiving the yet distant approach of Law's brigade, Warren commands the signal officers to continue their work to the last moment in order to create the impression that the hill is occupied, and, darting northward, seeks some casual force that may anticipate the fatal occupation of Little Round Top by the enemy.

It is the head of column of the Fifth Corps which he meets, hastening to the support of De Trobriand. He takes the responsibility of detaching the foremost troops and hurries them forward to anticipate the arrival of the Confederate line of battle. There is not a minute to spare. The opposing forces meet on the crest; the contest is close, fierce, and deadly. The rocky slopes and narrow, wooded passes resound with infernal clamor. Vincent falls at the head of his men. Weed, also, is struck down with a mortal wound, and as Hazlitt bends

over him to catch the last message, he, too, is thrown lifeless upon the body of his friend. But our line is now complete, and the valor of the men of Maine, Michigan, New York and Pennsylvania has made it secure. Well did General Abbott say that, but for the wonderful *coup d'a'il* of Warren and his prompt acceptance of responsibility, the name of Gettysburg might only have been known in history as that of the place where the Union cause made its grave.

Although the attempt of Hood to outflank the Union left had thus been foiled, his assaults upon the southwestern face of Sickles' line did not for a moment cease; while McLaws, now coming into action on Hood's left, assailed the force holding the peach-orchard. Adown both lines which formed that fatal angle the Confederate batteries poured their enfilading fire. Sweitzer's and Tilton's brigades had already been sent to assist Birney's division, and a portion of Humphreys' was brought over to support the left. But the hostile forces are too powerful. Eleven Confederate batteries have long been pounding our troops; and at last, with a supreme effort, Barksdale's Mississippians burst through Graham's feeble line, drive out McGilvray's artillery, and pour down into the rear of the Union troops. Sweitzer and Tilton are overwhelmed and thrown back, and for a time all seems lost.

But at this moment a powerful reinforcement^{*} is approaching the field. It is the division which Sumner organized in Camp California in the winter of 1861, and which Richardson and Hancock had led in action—commanded to-day by Caldwell.

The scene of the contest is the wheat-field so famous in the story of Gettysburg. This, and the woods on the south and west, are now full of the exulting enemy. Through

this space charges the fiery Cross, of the Fifth New Hampshire, with his well-approved brigade. It is his last battle. He, indeed, has said it, as he exchanged greetings with Hancock on the way; but he moves to his death with all the splendid enthusiasm he displayed at Fair Oaks, Antietam, and Fredericksburg. On his right, Patrick Kelly forms the Irish Brigade; and these two, comrades



in so many fights, dash across the wheat-field, capturing several hundred prisoners, but are received by a withering fire from the wall which lines the farther edge, now held by Kershaw's South Carolinians, some of the very regiments which held the stone wall at Marye's Heights in December. Cross falls, mortally wounded, with hundreds of his men; of the five hundred and thirty Irish-

men who have entered the wheat-field in those five oft-decimated regiments,¹ more than one-third are killed and wounded before the brigade is brought to a stand. On the extreme left, Hapgood's Fifth New Hampshire and five companies of the One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania are on the further side of a stone wall which runs up the line of Cross's advance; and these brave troops struggle somewhat farther forward than the rest; but all are at last halted by the weight of fire poured upon them.

And now from the rear approaches Brooke. Relieving the regiments of Cross, which fall back to the road—all but the regiment and a half on the left—he flings his brigade with one mighty effort upon the enemy. He will not be denied. On through the wheat-field, in spite of all, across the rivulet choked with the dead, into the woods, up the rocky slope, clear to the open space beyond, into the very sight of the Emmettsburg road, Brooke pushes, in his splendid charge, driving Semmes' Georgia brigade before him. But impetuous as has been his advance, he has not outstripped Zook's brigade, which comes up on his right: Zook's brigade no longer, for that intrepid leader has fallen with a mortal wound. Roberts, too, of the One Hundred and Fortieth is killed. Brooke assumes command of the entire line thus thrust out on the extreme verge, far beyond Birney's original position, and there anxiously awaits the arrival of reinforcements which shall make his flanks secure. But none appear; the enemy are pressing him actively in front and on both

¹ The three original regiments of the Irish Brigade, the Sixty-third, Sixty-ninth, and Eighty-eighth New York, were here consolidated as one battalion of six companies; each regiment as two companies.

flanks; his retreat is threatened. Brooke sees that he must retire; at the word his regiments let go their hold and fall back. Stricker, on the left, handles the Second Delaware with great courage and address, beating back the enemy, who seek to cut off the retreat; while Frazer, with the One Hundred and Fortieth, performs a like soldierly office on the right; and thus this gallant command falls back to the road, having lost one-half its numbers.

But the mischief caused by the adoption of the false line out on the Emmettsburg road is not yet complete. Pressing on in their victorious career, and now reinforced by Wofford's Georgians, the Confederates, who, through their capture of the peach-orchard, hold the key of the position, hurl back Sweitzer's brigade, strike in flank Ayres' division of regulars, and, after a brief contest, compel that highly disciplined force also to retreat, with the loss of more than half their numbers. But from Little Round Top, now firmly held by the good troops which first won it, reinforced by the Pennsylvania Reserves and two brigades of the Sixth Corps, coming in from their continuous march of thirty hours, Longstreet recoils. The whole space from the peach-orchard to the Devil's Den has been fought over again and again. Thousands upon thousands have fallen in that bloody arena, and Hood's division, victorious here, repulsed there, has had fighting enough.

But the Confederate capture of the peach-orchard had not alone affected Birney's division. The enemy's occupation of this position, the key of the battle-field, enabled them also, turning to their left, to pass into the rear of Humphreys, whose division had been extended along the Emmettsburg road, while, at the same time, a part of Anderson's division of Hill's corps was thrown

directly forward against Humphreys' right, and toward the wide gap between the Third and Second Corps.

Thus menaced, Humphreys changed front to rear, to meet Barksdale's onset on his left, fighting here a brief but desperate battle. So reluctant was he to retreat, so fierce was the hostile advance, that when he reformed his division along Plum Run, and turned at bay, one-half his men had fallen. Two regiments—the Forty-second New York, Colonel Mallon, and the Nineteenth Massachusetts, Lieutenant-Colonel Devereux—which Gibbon rapidly threw forward to assist Humphreys and to cover his right flank, were, after a brief contest, driven in with loss.

The position of the Union left centre had now become exceedingly critical. The disaster to Birney had drawn to the extreme left the whole Fifth Corps and Caldwell's division of the Second, leaving a mile of our line almost destitute of troops. Of this interval Humphreys' depleted division could fill but a small part. Upon receipt of the intelligence of the disaster to the Third Corps, followed closely by the news that General Sickles had been desperately wounded, General Meade placed General Hancock in command of that corps, as well as of his own, throwing upon him the responsibility of meeting the emergency thus created.

There were troops enough in the Union army, but could they be brought up in time to prevent McLaws and Anderson from penetrating our line, crossing Plum Run, and reaching the Taneytown road? From the First and Twelfth Corps men were already on the march to close the breach, but nearer yet was the enemy. Withdrawing from Hays' division the brigade of Willard, General Hancock conducted it in person, and placed it in position to cover a portion of the ground over which

Birney's division had retreated. So sharp was now the work that Willard's brigade was almost instantly in the thick of the fight; but, though their commander was killed and half the brigade fell, these good troops held their own. They even took the aggressive, and in a gallant charge, in which McDougall's One Hundred and Eleventh New York, greatly distinguished itself, forced back the Mississippians, while Barksdale himself fell, mortally wounded, under their fire.

But still other points remain to be defended, and the expected reinforcements do not arrive. Galloping along the line toward the north, Hancock sees a portion of Wilcox's brigade breaking into the open, from the cover of a clump of bushes. Believing these to be some of his own troops driven in from the front, the general rides forward to halt and post them, but is undeceived by a volley, which brings down his aide, Captain Miller. There are no troops, right or left, to be seen; but, as Hancock turns, he beholds a regiment coming from the rear. Dashing up to the colonel, and pointing to the Confederate column he exclaims: "Do you see those colors? Take them!" Scarcely are the words spoken when the gallant First Minnesota, under Colville, spring forward, without even waiting to come up into line, and precipitate themselves upon the masses of the enemy. The colonel, lieutenant-colonel, and major fall, with half a score of officers; three-fourths of the regiment are destroyed in the impetuous onset, but the invaders are fairly crushed by sheer weight and hurled back. Evan Thomas' battery (C, Fourth United States) opens a terrific fire at short range; the Second Corps guns, posted on Cemetery Ridge, turning their fire to the left, plough up the ranks of the Confederates, and McGilvray rapidly forms a powerful second line of artillery to defend the Taneytown road.

Let us now proceed further to the right. The violent forcing back of Humphreys' division brought destruction upon a detachment under Colonel George H. Ward, of the Fifteenth Massachusetts, consisting of his own regiment and the Eighty-second New York, Lieutenant-Colonel Huston, which, when Sickles made his ill-fated movement, had, by General Gibbon, been thrown forward to the Codori house, on the Emmettsburg road, with Brown's Rhode Island battery, to partially cover the gap caused by the abrupt removal of the right of the Third Corps.

We have said that as McLaws' division swept down on Humphreys' exposed left flank, a portion of Anderson's division of Hill's corps was also launched forward, according to the general plan of the assault. These troops consisted of three brigades of extraordinary gallantry and persistency—those of Perry, Wilcox, and Wright. Perry's and Wilcox's attacked Humphreys, as we have seen; Wright's, which advanced on Perry's left, came almost instantly into collision with Ward's force. A desperate resistance was made by the little band, which was far overlapped on either flank, and at last compelled to retreat, leaving Colonels Ward and Huston dead upon the field, with half their officers and men. Brown's battery fell for the moment into the hands of the Confederates, who, still further advancing, drove in the One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania, of Webb's brigade. Some of the more daring spirits of this brave brigade even reached the position held by the Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania. But in vain; the impulse with which they had started out was well-nigh exhausted; two-thirds of the brigade had already fallen in their great charge. The brigades of Posey and Mahone, of Anderson's division, had failed to start from the Confederate line for their

support,¹ and this fact had kept back Pender's entire division, upon Anderson's left; and so, after a brief but brave struggle, the Georgians gave way, and were immediately followed up by a countercharge of the Sixty-ninth and Seventy-second Pennsylvania, which reached even to the Emmettsburg road, and resulted in the recovery of Brown's guns and in a considerable capture of prisoners. The Nineteenth Maine, Colonel Heath, was also conspicuous in this movement.

The great crisis of the 2d of July is now passed, for up from the right and rear come the expected reinforcements: Doubleday's division and a portion of Robinson's division, of the First Corps; Williams' division, of the Twelfth, and Lockwood's Independent Maryland brigade. The brigades of Wheaton and Nevin, of the Sixth Corps, arriving from their long march, at the same time come into view along the side of Little Round Top, while Crawford's Pennsylvanians advance from the extreme left of our line. This suffices for Longstreet. His men have been fighting with superhuman courage for more than four hours of hot, continuous battle, and they may well recoil before the strong line of infantry and the powerful batteries of artillery now posted along Plum Run.

But hardly had the firing died down on the left when

¹ Colonel William E. Potter makes the suggestion that a cause for the detention of Posey's brigade, which in turn caused the detention of Mahone's brigade and of Pender's division, may be found in the attack made at 5.30 P.M., by a detachment from Hays' division, upon the Bliss barn, 580 yards from the main line, which had been occupied by the enemy's sharpshooters, who were at the hour named dislodged by four companies of the Twelfth New Jersey, under Captain Samuel B. Jobes. The action was a very gallant one on the part of the Jerseymen. Seven Confederate officers and ninety-two men were captured.

a fierce outburst on the right, at Culp's, and, a little later, on Cemetery Hill, told that Ewell was at last "putting in his work," so long delayed. One division, that of Johnson, advancing against the extreme right of the Union line, pressed strongly against the whole extent of our intrenchments on Culp's, and at last took possession of a portion of Slocum's works, which had been left without any troops to defend them, owing to the final and most urgent call for reinforcements. Here, in this critical position—threatening Meade's communications with Baltimore, and holding, as it were, a gate by which any number of Confederate troops might, during the night, be thrown into the very rear of the Union army—Johnson was found when darkness came on.

Meanwhile, Hays' and Avery's brigades, of Early's division of Ewell's corps, have been thrown against the position on East Cemetery Hill held by the Eleventh Corps. Advancing in splendid order, those formidable troops, in spite of an enfilading shower of canister from the guns of Whittier's Fifth Maine battery, stationed on the edge of Culp's Hill, push their way up the slope, with shouts of triumph; beat back the small and demoralized brigade of Van Gilsa; drive the Union artillerists from their guns, and, for the moment, occupy the crest. Thus a new and terrific danger suddenly confronts the Army of the Potomac. But troops are already on the march to meet it. Promptly on hearing the outburst from Cemetery Hill, Hancock, without waiting for any order from Meade, or even a request from Howard, put Carroll's brigade in motion.

The work could not have fallen to any body of troops better fitted to do it thoroughly and to do it quickly. It was the very work which the same brigade, under the same impetuous leader, was to be called upon to do, a

year later, on the afternoon of the second day in the Wilderness, when Longstreet's men, amid the smoke of the burning forest, should mount the intrenchments along the Brock road. The Eighth Ohio was on skirmish in front of the Third Division, and there was no time to recall it; but, with the Fourth Ohio, Fourteenth Indiana, and Seventh West Virginia, Carroll, moving by his right, rapidly covered the rear of the captured position, and, at the word, threw his brigade upon the troops of Hays and Avery. It was a critical moment, for large masses from Rodes' and Pender's divisions were simultaneously moving up from the Confederate side to attack Cemetery Hill on the west.

The action was short, sharp, and decisive. Hays and Avery were thrown out by Carroll's impetuous attack; and Gordon's brigade, advancing to their support, met them retreating down the slope. Thus the Eleventh Corps' position was restored, and its guns retaken. Early's assault upon the eastern face of Cemetery Hill having failed, Rodes' and Pender's, against the western face, was abandoned. At General Howard's earnest request, Carroll's brigade was allowed to remain on that part of the line where it had rendered such excellent service.

THE THIRD DAY.

So ended the great second day at Gettysburg. In general the prevailing spirit of the army was high and martial. At a council of war held soon after nightfall, at which all the corps commanders were present, it was unanimously resolved to abide the fortune of the coming day in the position which the army then occupied.

The 3d day of July broke in splendor. But before

the soothing, solemnizing beauty of that delicious landscape was revealed by the first rays of the sun, the clamor of human strife broke forth, and rose and swelled to fury along the wooded and rocky slopes of Culp's Hill. The troops of the Twelfth Corps, returning from the left, had found Johnson's Confederate division in their works overlooking the Baltimore road; and, supported by detachments from the Sixth Corps, only waited for light to advance and drive the intruders out. The contest was sharp; but the nature of the country did not permit of rapid and decisive work. Little by little, Johnson, with his own division and three brigades that had been sent to reinforce him, was compelled to give ground to Ruger, Geary, and Shaler, and at last to abandon the position altogether.

While the Twelfth Corps was thus engaged on the extreme right, General Alexander Hays, finding the enemy's skirmishers again troubling him from the Bliss barn, sent forward a detachment from the Twelfth New Jersey, which captured the barn, with the Confederate skirmish reserve. At a still later hour in the morning, the enemy again occupying this position, General Hays ordered a detachment from the Fourteenth Connecticut, Major Ellis, to take the buildings and burn them to the ground. The Fourteenth acquitted itself handsomely, losing ten killed and fifty-two wounded. Here was to be seen the new division commander, with his staff and his flag following him, dashing along the skirmish line, inciting his men to renewed activity, in the eye of both armies. Such demonstrations, which, with General Hays, were of frequent occurrence, were likely to give the impression that he was a mere hot-headed fighter; whereas, in fact, his extraordinary vivacity in battle was united with a soundness of judgment and a firmness of temper

which made him one of the most useful officers in the service.

And now ensued a long and strange silence. Forty-five thousand Confederates, and sixty thousand Union soldiers lay within easy sight and short cannon-shot of each other, awaiting the orders of their chiefs. Confident that neither the military nor the political exigencies which pressed upon General Lee would permit him to retire from the front of the Potomac army without further fighting, General Meade held to his resolution to conduct a purely defensive battle. The losses of the two days had been about equal in the two armies, but had fallen more severely upon the smaller force with which the Confederates had begun the conflict.

The positions occupied by the two armies had alike their advantages and their disadvantages. On the one side, Meade's shorter, convex, line gave him the important advantage of being able to transmit orders and to transfer troops from wing to wing with great celerity; on the other side, the long range of hills opposite the Union positions afforded space for a greater artillery than could be brought into action by the Union commander. Of the advantage last indicated, General Lee was, during the interval between 10 A.M. and 1 P.M., preparing to make the utmost use. One hundred and thirty-eight guns were coming into battery, with a view to a grand assault upon the Union centre along Cemetery Ridge.

One Confederate division remained entire and unbreathed. It was justly the most distinguished of that splendid army for discipline and valor. This was the division of Pickett, comprising the brigades of Garnett, Kemper, and Armistead—in all, fifteen Virginia regiments, the very flower of Southern chivalry. This division, the most distant of all on the morning of the 1st of July, had

not come up in season to take part in the action of either day, and was therefore selected to lead the great assault projected against the Union centre. Never fell more forlorn duty on braver men. Pickett was to be joined in the column of attack by the division of General Heth, to-day commanded by Pettigrew. Pender's division, which had not been engaged on the previous day, was divided—two brigades were in position to protect the left flank of the assaulting column; the other two brigades, under the command of Trimble, were to fall in behind Pettigrew. Wright's brigade was to follow in the rear of Pickett, while Wilcox's and Perry's brigades were to advance on Pickett's right to protect that flank.

The Union troops were arranged with somewhat more respect to the integrity of army corps than was possible the previous afternoon. Slocum, with the Twelfth Corps and Wadsworth's division of the First, held Culp's Hill, wrested from Ewell in the morning; Howard's Eleventh Corps and Robinson's division of the First were on Cemetery Hill; then, running to the left, came Hays' division of the Second Corps, then Gibbon's division of the same corps, then Doubleday's division of the First Corps, which had been thrust into the line intended for the Second Corps; then Caldwell's division of the Second Corps, returned from its fearful contest in the wheat-field; then the Third Corps, with Birney's division in the front line; then the Fifth Corps, stretching onward to the summit of Round Top. The Sixth Corps lay mainly in reserve.

In his survey of the Union line General Lee had hit upon the ground occupied by the Second and Third Divisions of the Second Corps as that upon which his assault should be directed. It will be necessary, therefore, to describe the nature of this position with some

fulness. Separating Cemetery Hill, so called, from Cemetery Ridge is a small wood, known as Ziegler's Grove, in which is posted Battery I of the First Artillery, under Lieutenant Woodruff. This battery, well advanced to the front, holds the right of the Second Corps line. It is supported by the One Hundred and Eighth New York; next comes the division of Alexander Hays, in two lines, the front line posted behind a low stone wall. Perhaps three hundred and fifty yards from the grove the stone wall runs westward (that is, toward the enemy), to enclose another and more advanced ridge. Here the wall is lower, and is surmounted by a country post-and-rail fence. Hays' left is formed of Smyth's brigade and Arnold's Rhode Island battery; Webb's brigade of Gibbon's division connects with Hays' division at the angle; on his line is posted Cushing's battery (A, Fourth United States). Hall's brigade, also of Gibbon's division, continues the line southward; with it is Brown's Rhode Island battery. Harrow's brigade, with which is Rorty's New York battery, continues Gibbon's line. On his front and Hall's the stone wall is replaced by an ordinary rail fence, which has been thrown down by the troops to gain some slight cover. Still farther to the south, in a clump of trees and bushes, lies Stannard's Vermont brigade of Doubleday's division.

The ground thus described was to constitute the scene of the approaching collision, but as yet this was known only to the Confederate leaders. The great assault was to be prepared for by a cannonade, the like of which has rarely, if ever, been known upon a field of battle. At precisely one o'clock two cannon-shot, in quick succession, gave the signal, and instantly the Confederate position was, for three miles, wrapped in flame and smoke. Nearly one hundred and forty guns opened at once on

the Union lines. The air shrieked with flying shot, the bursting shells sent their deadly fragments down in showers upon the rocky ridge and over the plain behind ; the earth was thrown up in clouds of dust as the monstrous missiles buried themselves in the ground, or glanced from the surface to take a new and, perchance, more fatal flight ; on every hand caissons exploded, struck by iron balls which but a half-minute before had lain in the limber-chests of batteries a mile away. All that is hideous in war seemed to have gathered itself together, to burst in one fell tornado upon Cemetery Ridge.

The effects of this unparalleled cannonade, as seen by the staff galloping along the line, were, on one side, very great, on the other, comparatively slight. The plain behind the ridge was almost immediately swept of all camp followers and the unordered attendants of an army. Headquarters and ammunition wagons went to the rear with prodigious zeal ; a body of stragglers and men casually absent from their regiments poured down the Baltimore road to the rear ; even General Meade's headquarters were broken up by the intolerable bombardment, and the non-combatants sought safety in flight, while the commander and staff mounted their horses in haste and sought safety nearer the line of battle. On the contrary, looking to the front, one saw only thin lines of infantry crouching behind the stone walls or clinging prone to the ground, the musket clutched tightly in each soldier's hand as he waited for the great charge which he well knew was to follow.

The main fury of the cannonade fell, of course, upon the batteries of the Second Corps, occupying the ground which Longstreet's columns were even now forming to assault ; and well did those gallant officers and men stand in their place, and make answer that day for their

cause. The volunteer batteries of Arnold, Brown, and Rorty vied with the splendid regular batteries of Woodruff and Cushing in cool bearing and scientific precision of fire. Out of those five batteries were killed two hundred and fifty horses, and men fell by scores at the guns or bringing ammunition up through a literal storm of shot and shell. But not a cannoneer left his post. There was no flurry and no fuss. Monotonous discharges followed the command, "Number one, fire!" "Number two, fire!" as regularly as if the battery were saluting an inspecting officer. From the left, McGilvray's forty-four guns, with Hazlitt's rifles far away down on Little Round Top; and from the right, on Cemetery Hill, Osborne's batteries gave a loyal support to the over-weighted artillery of the Second Corps.

The cannonade has lasted an hour and a quarter, and the ammunition of the artillery is getting low. Brown's battery, which had suffered severely on the previous day, is ordered from the field, and Cowan's New York battery takes its place. The other batteries are directed to cease firing, that they may be ready for the infantry charge soon to follow. From right to left our fire dies down, which the Confederates interpret to mean that our guns have been silenced by their greater weight of metal; and, for a few minutes, they lash our lines with redoubled fury.

And now, in the edge of the woods, the column of attack is seen forming. There stand the Confederate chiefs, grim and resolute for their great emprise. Well they understand the desperate hazard of the struggle to which they are called; Longstreet, to whom has been assigned the conduct of the day, hesitates. He has to be reminded more than once that precious minutes are passing. At last the die is cast, the word given, and the splendid col-

umn, fourteen thousand strong, is launched against the Union line.

Of Pickett's division, Garnett and Kemper are in the first line, Armistead in support. On Pickett's left is the division of Pettigrew. The advancing line offers a tempting mark to the artillerists on the Union centre and left; but, with an hour and a half of such work behind them, and with what is plainly before them in the next half-hour, it behooves our men to husband their strength and their ammunition. And so, for hundreds of yards, this column moves, in full view, almost unmolested, on its hostile errand.¹ The Second Corps batteries have a special reason for being silent. They have nothing but canister remaining, and must await close quarters. But now the brigades of Pickett, making a half-wheel to the left, in order to bring themselves directly face to face with Hancock, expose their right flanks to McGilvray's and Hazlitt's guns, while Osborne's batteries, from Cemetery Hill, open on Pettigrew's division. Undaunted by the sudden and tremendous outburst, Longstreet's men

¹ Among the most remarkable features of this famous assault was the conduct of the Eighth Ohio. This regiment, under Lieutenant-Colonel Franklin Sawyer, had been for nearly twenty-four hours on skirmish in front of Hays' division, across the Emmettsburg road. When the great charge took place, instead of retiring to the division line, Colonel Sawyer collected his regiment at a point just far enough outside the path of Pettigrew's advance to escape the Confederate column. After Pettigrew's repulse, Colonel Sawyer again threw forward his men as skirmishers, and gathered in a large number of prisoners, with three colors. So audacious was the action of this regiment as to give rise to an absurd report among those who witnessed it, but did not know the Eighth Ohio, that its commander was intoxicated. Those who did know the Eighth Ohio, however, were well aware that this was the very sort of thing which it was most likely to do in such a case.

ATTACK ON

SECOND CORPS

July 3^d 1863

CULMINATION OF LONGSTREET'S CHARGE

Confederates massing on centre and carrying stone wall; large numbers going or gone to the rear.

80 WIO.
LT. COL. SAWYER

PETTIGREW'S DIV.

EMMETTSBURG ROAD

SMYTH

STONE

ARNOLD

WEBB

SHERRILL

Zigler's Grove

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rush forward, over fields and fences, without wavering or staying in their course. But Wilcox, who should have been on their right, has failed ¹ to move in time, exposing thus the flank of the main column. And now the moment of collision is approaching. Pickett's division and a portion of Pettigrew's are directly in front of the position occupied by Gibbon's (Second) division of the Second Corps. The main body of Pettigrew's division is equally close to Hays' (Third) division of the Second Corps. Behind Pickett are the brigades of Lane and Scales.

Up the slope the Confederates rush with magnificent courage. At two or three hundred yards the Union infantry opens its deadly fire, but still the assailants push forward, undaunted, though Garnett falls dead in the van. And here appears the first serious consequence of Wilcox's failure to come up on the right. This has left open Pickett's flank on that side, and Hancock, easily the best tactician of the Potomac army, and always on the front line of battle, eagle-eyed, sees and seizes his opportunity. Galloping to Stannard's brigade, he directs him to move his regiments to the front and attack the flank of the assaulting force. And now the collision—for which these thousands of Confederates have crossed the bloody plain, and for which those soldiers of the Union have waited, through all that anxious time—comes with a crash and clamor that might well appall the stoutest heart. Upon the Sixty-ninth and Seventy-first Pennsylvania, of Webb's brigade, posted on the low stone wall, falls the full force of Longstreet's mighty blow.

¹ General Wilcox claims to have exactly executed the orders he received. Certainly no one who had had occasion to know General Wilcox's enterprise and audacity, on a score of battle-fields, could possibly doubt his willingness to do whatever might be required of him.

Like leaves in autumn gales the Philadelphians drop along the line. Now the position of the Seventy-first is carried, and the right of the Sixty-ninth is thrown over upon its centre; now the Confederate flags wave over the stone wall; the men of Kemper and Armistead, of Garnett and Archer, pour in through the gap, led by Armistead in person, and beat down Cushing's gunners over their pieces. The gallant and accomplished young commander of the battery gives one last shot for honor and for country, and falls dead among his men. For the moment that great and long-prepared charge is successful. Meade's line is broken. In the very centre of the Union position, crowning Cemetery Ridge, wave the flags of Virginia and the Confederacy.

Meanwhile Pettigrew's brigades are engaged at close range with Hays' division. Deployed at fifty to two hundred yards, they maintain an unavailing fusilade, which is responded to with fearful effect by the cool and hardy troops of Hays. The regiments of Smyth's brigade, now commanded by Colonel Pierce, of the One Hundred and Eighth New York, for Smyth has been wounded in the cannonade, bear themselves with a gallantry that cannot be surpassed. The Twelfth New Jersey, First Delaware, and Fourteenth Connecticut, on Smyth's left, pour in a deadly fire, before which the Confederate line curls and withers like leaves in the flame. While Pettigrew is thus engaged, Lane and Scales, of Pender's division, moving rapidly up from Pickett's rear, thrust themselves into the fight, finding a place where they can, among the fighting brigades. Wright, Thomas, and McGowan advance nearer the scene of conflict, to cover the retreat or to crown the victory. And so, for an awful quarter of an hour, the two lines stand confronting each other, here two hundred yards apart,

there but forty, pouring upon each other a close and unremitting fire.

Let us now pass in thought to a point behind the Union line, shaken by this most gallant assault, and see what is doing there in that moment of suspense. When the Seventy-first Pennsylvania was forced back, and Cushing's guns had fallen into the hands of the exultant enemy, no panic seized the veteran troops of the Second Corps, which, from the rear and from the flank, beheld the Confederate flags waving on the stone wall. With one spontaneous impulse officers and men bend themselves toward the point of danger. Gibbon has already fallen, severely wounded. The gallant Webb rallies the Seventy-first Pennsylvania, and forms it on his remaining regiment, the Seventy-second. Hall, whose brigade lies on Webb's left, moves a portion of his command promptly to attack the enemy's column in flank, while Harrow, of the First Brigade, throws his veteran regiments forward to help restore the line. So eager are the troops to join in the fray that men break from the ranks and rush toward the point where the head of the Confederate column, giving and taking death at every blow, still lies within the Union lines, incapable of making further progress, and fast being walled in by a force against which it may not long contend. It is a moment for personal example, and personal examples are not wanting. Hunt, chief of artillery, rides along the line and fires barrel after barrel of his revolver into the faces of the enemy; while two young officers, bravest of the brave, Major Mitchell, of Hancock's staff, and Lieutenant Haskell, of Gibbon's, ride mounted through an interval between the Union battalions, and call upon the troops to go forward.

It must be evident, even to one who knows nothing of war, that such a strain as this could not be long con-

tinued. Something must give way under such a pressure. If one side will not, the other must; if not at one point, then at another. The Union infantry has come up somewhat tumultuously, it is true, but courageously, nay, enthusiastically, and has formed around the head of Longstreet's column four ranks deep. Armistead is down. Every field-officer in Pickett's division, except Pickett and one lieutenant-colonel, has fallen.

The time has come to advance the standards of the Second Corps. With loud cries and a sudden forward surge, in which every semblance of formation is lost, the Union troops move upon the now faltering foe. One moment more and all is over. The most of the surviving Confederates throw themselves on the ground; others seek to escape capture, and retreat hurriedly down the hill and across the plain, which is once more shrieking with the fire of the artillery, now reinforced by Weir's, Wheeler's, Kinzie's, and other batteries.

Then did the Second Corps go forward, "gathering up battle-flags in sheaves," and gathering in prisoners by thousands. Thirty-three standards and four thousand prisoners are the fruits of that victory. And so Fredericksburg is avenged! Yet not without fearful losses. Hancock has fallen, desperately wounded, in the moment of victory. Gibbon and Webb are also wounded; while in the Second Division, on which fell the utmost weight of the great assault, five battalion commanders have been killed. Scarcely any regimental field-officers remain unwounded. The corps artillery, too, has suffered an extraordinary severity of punishment. Cushing is dead, and Woodruff and Rorty; Brown is wounded; Arnold alone remains at the head of his battery.

Only a few minutes after the repulse of Longstreet had been made complete and hopeless, Wilcox, with his

Alabama brigade, being late in starting and having lost his direction on Pickett's right, came up against McGilvray's artillery and the infantry of the First Corps. His attack was gallantly made; but his one or two thousand men could, of course, accomplish nothing at that place, in that time, and he was easily thrown off, with great loss. Even while Longstreet's charge was in progress, Gregg's division of cavalry, with Custer's Michigan brigade, was fiercely contesting the attempt of Stuart—who, only the evening before, had brought back his jaded cavalry from their long and fruitless raid—to carry the Baltimore road, far around on the Union right, with a view to cutting off Meade's retreat should the infantry attack be successful. The action was long and desperate, resulting in the repulse of the Confederates. Later in the afternoon another engagement occurred, out on the Union left, between our own and the Confederate cavalry, in which the brave Farnsworth fell at the head of the First Vermont.

Although Hancock had been wounded he did not relinquish command until all was over. Raising himself on his elbow, he looked over the tumble-down stone wall, on the line of Stannard's Vermont brigade, behind which he had fallen, and directed the progress of the fight; then dictated a despatch to General Meade, announcing the Confederate repulse, and expressing the opinion that, if the Third and Sixth Corps could be thrown forward, the enemy's defeat would be decisive and total; then, feeling himself grow faint with loss of blood, he sent a message to General Caldwell, requesting him to assume charge of the corps. It seemed best to General Meade, however, to disturb the natural succession according to rank, and by an order, of that evening, General Caldwell was superseded by General Will-

iam Hays, whom we saw commanding a brigade of French's (Third) division of the Second Corps at Chancellorsville, where he was captured. This was but one of many instances, during those momentous days, in which the new commander of the Potomac army exercised the exceptional power conferred upon him by the President.

Such, to the Second Corps, was the battle of Gettysburg. The corps had taken into fight fewer than ten thousand men. It had lost 4,350, of whom 349 were commissioned officers. Of the total loss only 368 were among the missing. The corps had captured, on the second and third days, 4,500 prisoners. Gibbon's division had lost 1,634; Caldwell's, 1,269; Hays', 1,291; the artillery brigade, 149; the headquarters cavalry squadron, 4; the corps staff, 3.

The brigades which had suffered most were the First Brigade (Harrow), Second Division, 764; the Third Brigade (Willard) of the Third Division, 714; the Second Brigade (Webb) of the Second Division, 482; the First, Third, and Fourth Brigades of the First Division, the Third Brigade of the Second Division, and the Second Brigade of the Third Division suffered about equally, their several losses ranging from 330 to 383.

The officers killed or mortally wounded were :

General Samuel K. Zook, Colonel Edward E. Cross, and Lieutenant Ruel G. Austin, Fifth New Hampshire.

Colonel Richard P. Roberts, Captain David Acheson, and Lieutenant Alexander M. Wilson, One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania.

Colonel George L. Willard and Captain Ephraim Wood, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York.

Colonel Eliakim Sherrill, Captains Isaac Skinner, Orin J. Herendeen, and Charles M. Wheeler, and Lieutenants Abram Hunton, Jacob Sherman, and Rufus P. Holmes, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York.

Colonel Paul J. Revere, Major H. L. Patten (Brevet Brigadier-General), Lieutenants Henry Ropes¹ and Sumner Paine, Twentieth Massachusetts.

Colonel Dennis O'Kane, Lieutenant-Colonel Martin Tschudy, Captains Michael Duffy and George C. Thompson, and Lieutenant Charles F. Kelly, Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania.

Colonel George H. Ward, Captains John Murkland and Hans P. Jorgensen, and Lieutenant Elisha G. Buss, Fifteenth Massachusetts.

¹ I cannot forbear quoting the tribute paid to this young officer by Major Henry L. Abbott, commanding the Twentieth Massachusetts. It is not only interesting as a study of soldierly character, but it is of peculiar value as coming from one who, perhaps, at the time of his own early death from wounds received in the Wilderness, had not his superior among the officers of his own years.

“His conduct in this action, as in all previous ones, was perfectly brave, but not with the bravery of excitement that nerves common men. He was in battle absolutely cool and collected, apparently unconscious of the existence of such a feeling as personal danger, the slight impetuosity and excitability natural to him at ordinary times being sobered down into the utmost self-possession, giving him an eye that noticed every circumstance, no matter how thick the shot and shell, a judgment that suggested in every case the proper measures, and a decision that made the application instantaneous. It is impossible for me to conceive of a man more perfectly master of himself; more completely noting or remembering every circumstance in times when the ordinary brave man sees nothing but a tumult, and remembers, after it is over, nothing but a whirl of events which he is unable to separate.”

Lieutenant-Colonel Amos E. Steele, Jr., and Lieutenant Albert Slafter, Seventh Michigan.

Lieutenant-Colonel Max A. Thoman and Lieutenant William H. Pohlman, Fifty-ninth New York.

Lieutenant-Colonel Henry C. Merwin and Lieutenant Jedediah Chapman, Jr., Twenty-seventh Connecticut.

Lieutenant-Colonel James Huston, Captain Jonah C. Hoyt, and Lieutenants John Cranston and John H. McDonald, Eighty-second New York.

Major Edward Venuti, Fifty-second New York.

Captains John P. Blinn (Assistant Adjutant-General) and J. McK. Rorty, First New York Artillery.

Captains George H. Ince and Elijah H. Munn, Sixty-sixth New York.

Captain George D. Smith and Lieutenant Leroy S. Scott, Nineteenth Maine.

Captains John M. Stephan and William H. Dull, Seventy-first Pennsylvania.

Captains Louis Muller, N. S. Messick, Wilson B. Farrell, and Joseph Perrian, and Lieutenants David B. Demarest, Waldo Farrar, and Charles H. Mason, First Minnesota.

Captain Andrew McBride, and Lieutenants James I. Griffith and Sutton Jones, Seventy-second Pennsylvania.

Captains Henry V. Fuller and Alfred H. Lewis, and Lieutenants Willis G. Babcock and Ira S. Thurber, Sixty-fourth New York.

Captain George G. Griswold, and Lieutenants Horatio F. Lewis and George H. Finch, One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania.

Captain M. W. B. Elligood and Lieutenant William Smith, First Delaware.

Captain Robert M. Forster and Lieutenant John A. Bayard, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania.

Captain Charles K. Horsfall and Lieutenant Richard Townsend, Twelfth New Jersey.

Lieutenant Alonzo H. Cushing, Fourth United States Artillery.

Lieutenant George A. Woodruff, First United States Artillery.

Lieutenants John H. Drake, Augustus W. Proses, and Erastus M. Granger, One Hundred and Eleventh New York.

Lieutenants Herman Donath and Sherman S. Robinson, Nineteenth Massachusetts.

Lieutenant Elijah Hayden, Eighth Ohio.

Lieutenants Ferdinand M. Pleis (Adjutant) and William H. Smith, One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenants Hammill W. Ottey and George G. Plank, Second Delaware.

Lieutenants Addison H. Edgar and Samuel J. Shoub, Fourth Ohio.

Lieutenants Theodor Paush and Adolph Wagner, Thirty-ninth New York.

Lieutenant Franklin K. Garland, Sixty-first New York.

Lieutenant William McClelland (Adjutant), Eighty-eighth New York.

Lieutenants Carl V. Amiet, Robert Evans, and Dayton T. Card, One Hundred and Eighth New York.

Lieutenant Joseph S. Milne, First Rhode Island Artillery.

This list embraces 91 officers. The original reports of "killed in action" embraced 67 officers, the difference representing those who subsequently died of their wounds, being an addition of about one-third to the original number of those killed, out of 269 officers reported as wounded. That is, somewhat fewer than one-

tenth of the officers reported wounded subsequently died of their wounds. The proportion of officers to men in the lists of killed and wounded is very great, being as follows: Officers: killed, 67; wounded, 269. Enlisted men: killed, 729; wounded, 2,917.

Among the officers of rank wounded were Generals Hancock and Gibbon, both severely; Colonels Brooke and Smyth, commanding brigades (the former officer, however, remained on duty); Colonel Morris and Lieutenant-Colonel Hammill, Sixty-sixth New York; Colonel Baxter, Seventy-second Pennsylvania; Colonel McDougall, One Hundred and Eleventh New York; Colonel Brown, One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania; Colonel Bingham, Sixty-fourth New York; Colonel Colville, Lieutenant-Colonel Adams, and Major Downie, First Minnesota; Lieutenant-Colonel Bentley, Sixty-third New York; Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Freudenberg, Fifty-second New York; Lieutenant-Colonel Macy, Twentieth Massachusetts; Lieutenant-Colonel Wass and Major Rice, Nineteenth Massachusetts; Major Hildebrandt, Thirty-ninth New York.

CHAPTER IX.

GETTYSBURG TO THE RAPIDAN.

It would add nothing to the interest of this history to discuss the question whether General Meade should, on the repulse of Longstreet's charge, have assumed the aggressive, advancing upon the Confederate position with the comparatively fresh Sixth and Twelfth Corps, with such supports as might have been drawn from those troops which had borne the stress of the great battle. Much has been said on that side ; much in defence of General Meade's actual policy of contenting himself with the results already won, and putting nothing to hazard. Certain it is that the backbone of the Confederacy was broken on the field of Gettysburg ; and from that day the Southern cause went steadily backward.

Darkness fell while the troops were momentarily expecting the order to advance. Toward morning came on a terrible storm, one of those instances which seem to establish a connection between battles and rainfall. In this instance, at any rate, the downpour was in proportion to the violence of the preceding cannonade. The soldiers were drenched in an instant ; and sudden torrents swept over the hills, as if to wash out the stains of the great battle. One of the Second Corps hospitals, around which had been collected hundreds of the Confederate wounded, was flooded ; and some of the helpless prisoners were actually in danger of drowning where

they lay, but were with great haste dragged or carried to higher ground. "Our men," says General Morgan, "as always, according to my observation, were full of kindness for the wounded, and I saw them sharing with the prisoners at the hospital their coffee and crackers. Lying on the ground here, in the rain, smoking a little old pipe, with an expression of satisfaction and content quite observable, I saw Colonel Fry, of the Thirteenth Alabama, formerly an officer of our army. On inquiring whether he was wounded, the colonel showed me a compound fracture of the thigh-bone. I went away, pretty certain that a man who could, with such a desperate wound, lie all night in a rain so heavy as to cover the ground where he lay some inches with water, and then smoke his pipe with apparently so serene a satisfaction in the morning, was not going to give up the ghost yet, and was not surprised afterward to hear of the colonel's recovery."

"On the morning of the 4th," continues Morgan, "the field of battle presented a curious sight. Parties were gathering up the arms abandoned by the enemy and sticking the bayonets in the ground, so that there were acres of muskets standing as thick as trees in a nursery." It was safe at that time planting muskets in front of the Army of the Potomac; for, although Lee's army was still in position, within easy cannon range, he was glad enough to remain undisturbed while his trains and wounded and prisoners were gaining distance on that retreat which had become inevitable. The invasion foiled, his ammunition well-nigh spent, with twenty-five thousand gone out of the force with which he had crossed the Potomac, with but two brigades that had not been engaged, it was imperative upon the Confederate commander to withdraw through the passes of the South Mountain and make his

way back into Virginia. Yet, as he stood at bay behind Antietam Creek, all through the 18th of September, 1862, in order to make his retreat orderly, and to save his artillery and trains; so, on the 4th of July, 1863, he maintained a firm front, behind fortifications, upon Seminary Ridge, though withdrawing the wing which had menaced Culp's and Cemetery Hills, leaving the town of Gettysburg to be reoccupied by the Eleventh Corps. On the night of the 4th Lee abandoned his camps, and commenced his retreat by the Fairfield route. The point at which he aimed to cross the Potomac was Falling Waters, three or four miles below Williamsport. Here he had left a pontoon bridge as he moved to the invasion of Pennsylvania. How that bridge was destroyed by a detachment from French's command, at Frederick, on the very afternoon of the great charge; how Lee, arriving in retreat, found this resource cut away, while the river, rising rapidly from the recent rains, submerged the fords above and below, compelling the Confederate army to make another stand, with its back to the swollen river; how, even in spite of many delays and slow movements, Meade found himself, on the 12th of July, in front of Lee's forces, which were drawn up in a semicircle covering Williamsport, at bay before the victors of Gettysburg—these events do not greatly concern the history of the Second Corps.

That body of troops, Brigadier-General William Hays temporarily assigned to the command, remained through the 4th upon the ridge they had so well defended; moved on the evening of the 5th to Two Taverns, on the Baltimore pike, where they passed the 6th; on the day following, the 7th, they moved to Taneytown; on the 8th, to Frederick City; on the 9th, to Rohrsersville; and on the 10th, to Tighlmanon. From the last-mentioned

camp the corps made a short march, on the 11th, and took position upon the left of the Fifth Army Corps, once more confronting the enemy. During the 12th slight changes of position were made, with reference to the anticipated assault upon Lee's army, which was at bay around Williamsport, the swollen Potomac behind it.

It is the loss of the 13th of July which has caused the severest criticism of General Meade. General Humphreys, in his work, "Gettysburg to the Rapidan," declares that Lee's intrenchments at Williamsport were not less formidable than those he occupied at Marye's Heights. Whatever one may conjecture as to the issue of an attack upon the army at Williamsport, the assault was, in fact, not delivered. When, in the early morning of the 14th, a reconnoissance was made, in force, from the front of each corps, it was found that the enemy had escaped into Virginia, the river having fallen sufficiently to permit their crossing, though still with extreme difficulty.

General Morgan, in his narrative, declares that the Second Corps headquarters were greatly relieved to find the enemy gone: "I say 'to our relief,' because a careful examination had made it apparent that we could not cross the stream in our front, in line of battle, without breaking all to pieces, and it was too near the enemy's line to cross and reform. Caldwell's division," continues General Morgan, "moved out from the Second Corps, and followed the cavalry in pursuit nearly to the bridge at Falling Waters. A cleaner retreat was perhaps never made. I saw some abandoned muskets, a few old shoes stuck in the mud, two pieces of artillery and one or two ambulances, also stalled in the road. Several hundred prisoners were picked up in the woods and barns."

The "pursuit" of Lee was at an end. Whatever further might be done against the Confederate army must

constitute a new campaign, for the invasion was over and the Confederate army was safely back in Virginia. All occasion for haste ceased with the recrossing of the Potomac; and the Union forces moved, during the following days, at a more leisurely pace, the Second Corps going into camp, on the 15th, near Sandy Hook (Harper's Ferry), where it remained through the 16th and 17th. On the 18th the corps crossed the river and moved to Hillsboro'; on the 19th the march was continued to Woodgrove; on the 20th, to Bloomfield, where the troops rested through the 21st. On the 22d the march was resumed, the corps reaching Paris that day, Linden on the 23d, Markham Station on the 24th, White Plains on the 25th. At Germantown, which was covered by the march of the 26th, the corps rested through the three following days, moving on the 30th to Elk Run, and on the 31st to Morrisville, where a long halt was destined to be made. The Army of the Potomac was now back again upon the Rappahannock; and here opportunity was to be offered for refitting and recruiting, after the terrible losses, both of men and of material, which had been sustained.

The following table shows the numbers of the Second Corps, according to the several monthly returns, from January to July, inclusive.

| | Present for duty. | On extra or daily duty. | Present, sick or wounded. | Present, in arrest or con- finement. | Absent. | Aggre- gate. |
|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|---|---------|-----------------|
| 1863. | | | | | | |
| January 31st | 16,104 | 1,877 | 1,723 | 111 | 12,714 | 32,529 |
| February 28th | 15,849 | 2,136 | 2,072 | 144 | 10,704 | 30,905 |
| March 31st | 16,989 | 1,752 | 1,769 | 161 | 8,496 | 29,167 |
| April 30th | 16,839 | 1,431 | 562 | 82 | 7,998 | 26,912 |
| May 31st | 12,649 | 1,336 | 769 | 158 | 7,344 | 22,256 |
| June 30th | 13,145 | 862 | 413 | 68 | 7,848 | 22,336 |
| July 31st | 7,681 | 755 | 413 | 92 | 11,163 | 20,104 |

Here we see the great reduction between January and July, 1863, partly from the losses by wounds and disease, but more through the expiry of the terms of enlistment of the two-years regiments raised in New York, and of the nine-months regiments common to all the States. In spite of the accession of General Alexander Hays' brigade, which joined on the march to Gettysburg, the aggregate of the corps, present and absent, fell from 32,529, at the close of January, to 20,104, at the close of July.

The two-years regiments lost to the Second Corps were the Fourth, Seventh, and Thirty-fourth New York, while the numbers of the Tenth New York were so much diminished that it was reduced to a battalion of six companies.

The nine-months regiments which had been lost to the corps were the One Hundred and Twenty-seventh, One Hundred and Thirtieth, One Hundred and Thirty-second Pennsylvania; the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-eighth New Jersey, and the Twenty-seventh Connecticut. Of these the last only had taken part in the battle of Gettysburg, with such numbers as were left to it after its great disaster at Chancellorsville, already mentioned. Still one other source of loss remains to be mentioned. The Fifth New Hampshire, which had performed prodigies of valor at Fair Oaks, Antietam, and Fredericksburg, and which had passed through the battle of Gettysburg with the loss of nearly one-half its remaining members, including the heroic Colonel Cross, was in July detached from the corps and sent back to New Hampshire, to be recruited. It was to return during the great campaign of 1864, to render such service as should round out its noble record, and place it highest of all upon the list of infantry regiments suffering the greatest losses in battle during the war for the Union, in all the armies, East or West.

The following table shows the foregoing figures reduced to percentage :

| | Present for duty. | On extra or daily duty. | Present for duty or on extra or daily duty. | Present. sick or in arrest. | Total pres- ent. | Absent. | Aggre- gate. |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------|---------|-----------------|
| 1863. | | | | | | | |
| January 31st | 49.51 | 5.77 | 55.28 | 5.64 | 60.92 | 39.08 | 100 |
| February 28th ... | 51.26 | 6.92 | 58.18 | 7.18 | 65.36 | 34.64 | 100 |
| March 31st | 58.25 | 6.00 | 64.25 | 6.62 | 70.87 | 29.13 | 100 |
| April 30th | 62.57 | 5.32 | 67.89 | 2.39 | 70.28 | 29.72 | 100 |
| May 31st | 56.84 | 6.00 | 62.84 | 4.17 | 67.01 | 32.99 | 100 |
| June 30th | 58.85 | 3.86 | 62.71 | 2.15 | 64.86 | 35.14 | 100 |
| July 31st | 38.21 | 3.76 | 41.97 | 2.51 | 44.48 | 55.52 | 100 |

This table shows the effects of battle more strikingly than the former. In the first column we have the "Present for duty," depressed at the end of January below fifty per cent., by reason of the terrible losses at Marye's Heights, rising by the end of April to 62.57, in consequence of the return of wounded men from hospital, to fall to 38.21 after the battle of Gettysburg.

But to deaths from wounds and disease, and to discharges for disability or expiry of enlistment, was now to be added a new cause for weakening the Second Corps. In consequence of the riotous resistance to the conscription act in New York City, Colonel S. S. Carroll, commanding First Brigade, Third Division, was in July ordered to the East, with the Fourth and Eighth Ohio and Fourteenth Indiana. From the Second Division those excellent regiments, the First Minnesota and the Seventh Michigan, were also despatched on this duty. Unfortunately, the ruffians who had burned orphan asylums, pillaged defenceless houses, murdered stray militia men, and filled the days and nights with terror, could not pluck up courage enough to try conclusions with these veteran regiments from the front. Certain it

is, the "boys in blue" would have liked nothing better than an opportunity to strike at the scoundrels who had sought to stab the nation in the back; and had they struck, it would have been for the admonition of traitors to the end of time.

During the earlier part of August, as during all of July that followed Longstreet's charge against Cemetery Ridge, Brigadier-General William Hays remained in command of the corps. On the 12th of August General G. K. Warren, who had, on the 8th of the month, been appointed a Major-General of Volunteers, in recognition of his eminent services at Gettysburg, was assigned to the command while General Hancock should remain absent. General Warren was graduated from West Point in 1850, and became a brevet Second Lieutenant in the Topographical Engineers. Until the breaking out of the Rebellion he had been engaged in extensive and varied services, mainly of a scientific nature, on the Upper and the Lower Mississippi, in the Pacific Railroad exploration, in the Sioux expedition of 1855, in reconnoissances in the great new Northwest, and between 1859-61 as Assistant Professor of Mathematics at the Military Academy. On the outbreak of the war he became Lieutenant-Colonel of the Fifth New York (Duryea Zouaves), and was engaged at Big Bethel; at Hanover Court-House, (here and afterward commanding brigade); at Gaines' Mill, where he was wounded; at Malvern Hill (both on the 30th of June and the 1st of July), and at Manassas, where his splendid conduct commanded universal admiration. General Warren remained in command of his brigade during the Antietam and Fredericksburg campaigns. In February he became chief topographical officer of the Army of the Potomac, and as such served on the staff of Burnside, of Hooker at Chancellorsville, and of Meade at

Gettysburg. Of his services in the last-named battle we have already spoken. General Warren was cordially welcomed to the Second Corps.

The following was the organization of the corps, as appears by the monthly return for August 31st :

Artillery brigade, Captain JOHN G. HAZARD, First Rhode Island Artillery, commanding : Batteries A and B, First Rhode Island ; Batteries F and G, First Pennsylvania ; Battery I, First United States ; Battery G, First New York. Battery H, First Ohio, was also attached temporarily, but was not carried into the strength of the command.

First Division, Brigadier-General JOHN C. CALDWELL, commanding. First Brigade, Colonel Nelson A. Miles : Sixty-first New York ; Eighty-first and One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania. Second Brigade, Colonel Patrick Kelly : Sixty-third (battalion), Sixty-ninth (battalion), and Eighty-eighth (battalion) New York ; One Hundred and Sixteenth (battalion) Pennsylvania ; Twenty-eighth Massachusetts. Third Brigade, Colonel Paul Frank : Fifty-second, Fifty-seventh, and Sixty-sixth New York ; One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania. Fourth Brigade, Colonel James A. Beaver : Fifty-third and One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania ; Second Delaware ; Sixty-fourth New York—twelve regiments and four battalions.

Second Division, Brigadier-General WILLIAM HARROW, commanding. First Brigade, Colonel D. W. C. Baxter : First Minnesota ;¹ Fifteenth Massachusetts ; Eighty-second New York ; Nineteenth Maine. Second Brigade, Brigadier-General Alexander S. Webb : Sixty-ninth, Seventy-first, Seventy-second, and One Hundred and

¹ On detached service in New York.

Sixth Pennsylvania. Third Brigade, Lieutenant-Colonel Ansel D. Wass: Nineteenth and Twentieth Massachusetts; Forty-second and Fifty-ninth New York; Seventh Michigan;¹ one company Massachusetts sharpshooters; one company Minnesota sharpshooters—thirteen regiments and two companies.

Third Division, Brigadier-General ALEXANDER HAYS, commanding. First Brigade, Colonel Joseph Snyder: Fourth and Eighth Ohio;¹ Fourteenth Indiana;¹ Seventh West Virginia. Second Brigade, Lieutenant-Colonel Davis: One Hundred and Eighth New York; Fourteenth Connecticut; Twelfth New Jersey; Tenth New York; First Delaware. Third Brigade, Brigadier-General Joshua T. Owen: Thirty-ninth, One Hundred and Eleventh, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth, and One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York—twelve regiments and one battalion.

Company M, Tenth New York Cavalry, and Company G, Thirteenth Pennsylvania Cavalry, both commanded by Second Lieutenant Robert Brown, were attached to headquarters, but not borne on the strength of the corps.

It will be observed that the suicidal policy, then in full operation in the Northeastern States, of creating large, raw, and often useless regiments, instead of filling up the tried and veteran bodies at the front, had already caused the reduction of five splendid regiments of the old corps to "battalions" of less than ten companies. This was to proceed through 1863 and 1864, until at last comparatively few of the noble regiments of 1861 remained with their full regimental organization.

The corps staff comprised the following: Walker, As-

¹ On detached service in New York.

sistant Adjutant-General ; Morgan, Assistant Inspector-General ; Batcheller, Quartermaster ; Smith, Commissary of Subsistence ; Dougherty, Medical Director ; Monroe (Fifteenth Massachusetts), Medical Inspector ; Bingham, (One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania), Judge Advocate ; Livermore (Fifth New Hampshire), Chief of Ambulances ; Mintzer (Fifty-third Pennsylvania), Acting Provost-Marshal ; Brownson, additional Aide-de-Camp and Commissary of Musters ; Haskell and Roebling, Aides-de-Camp ; Thickston and Neal, Signal Officers.

Of the foregoing, Lieutenant F. A. Haskell, of Wisconsin, was the officer of General Gibbon's staff who so distinguished himself at Gettysburg, on the 3d, and who was, later, to lay down his life, as Colonel of the Thirty-sixth Wisconsin, at Cold Harbor. Lieutenant Washington A. Roebling was of the personal staff of General Warren. He was an officer of rare topographical abilities, and was destined to achieve fame, in later years, by his engineering skill in the construction of the great Brooklyn Bridge.

The long halt on the banks of the Rappahannock was marked by the most painful incident of warfare—military executions. A weak sympathy with criminals had, in 1861 and 1862, prevented those few examples of condign punishment for desertion, for sleeping on post, and for cowardice in battle, which would have then accomplished the maximum of good. The shooting of a score of bad men in 1861 would literally have saved the lives of thousands of good men in 1862 and 1863. For want of this, many regiments became badly disorganized, and, in the new phrase of the war, "demoralized," and the infection extended to entire brigades. After Gettysburg, however, an increasing sense of the needs of the service, combined with the special exigency created by the appearance

of the "bounty-jumper," or professional deserter, sufficed to bring the administration at Washington up to the shooting-point; and the long stay on the Rappahannock, in August of 1863, was marked by a considerable number of military executions. Three men were shot in the Second Corps—one on the 21st and two on the 28th of August. Unfortunately, the provost-marshal's detachments did their work in a very bungling manner, owing to the novelty and the highly distressing nature of their new duty. Among the other incidents attendant on the way the army was then being recruited, must be mentioned the murder of Captain Thomas McKay, of the Twentieth Massachusetts, while acting as officer of the day, on the 6th of October. This atrocious act, singularly rare in our army, was committed by a "bounty-jumper" who had recently joined the regiment, but who escaped and deserted to the enemy the night of the murder.

An incident of a very different order was the presentation, by officers of the Second Corps, to General Sedgwick, at the headquarters of the Sixth Corps, August 23d, of a magnificent war-horse, with full equipments, and a sword mounted in gold and decorated with a wealth of precious stones. The testimonial was a noble one in its beauty and costliness, but to the gallant and gentle knight who received it the value was enhanced manifold by the ardent affection which lay behind the gift. The occasion was one of great interest. All the most distinguished officers of the army were, by invitation, present; but peculiarly was the day made a pledge of friendship between the two great army corps, already so closely bound together by remembrance of mutual service and support, and by interchange of commanders. With such sentiments inspiring the gathering, it may not be doubted that, with the proverbial hospitality of the

Sixth Corps, this was made one of the great feast-days of the Army of the Potomac.

The month of August had passed quietly, the interval of rest being devoted to the re-equipment of the troops, to inspections and "surveys" of unserviceable property—the work falling mainly on the staff. But the month was not to end with the troops in camp, although the occasion for the disturbance was so trivial and so odd as to give the movement somewhat the air of a farce. On the 31st of the month the several divisions broke camp and took positions covering the fords of the Rappahannock. The motive for this movement was found in the purpose to destroy certain small gun-boats which the enemy had placed in the Rappahannock, and which the cavalry, with such assistance as the infantry might be able to render, were to cut off and destroy. Whether the cavalry caught the gun-boats, I don't think any man in the Second Corps ever quite made out; and, after three days of this new species of hunting, the corps returned to its old camps near Morrisville and Elk Run.

Here the time was spent until the 12th of September, when the information that General Lee, pressed by the urgent necessities of the Confederate armies of the West, had despatched all of Longstreet's corps, except only Pickett's division, to confront Rosecrans at Chickamauga, caused a forward movement of the Army of the Potomac, in which the Second Corps and the cavalry took the lead. On the 12th, Rappahannock Station was occupied, and on the next day both cavalry and infantry were thrown across the river; and, advancing rapidly, drove the Confederate cavalry out of the peninsula lying between the Rappahannock and the Rapidan. The other corps followed and occupied this space, so often skirmished over and fought for by the

contending forces. The Second and Sixth Corps were thrown forward to the Rapidan to hold the fords, the other corps remaining in support. The necessity of pressing Lee closely, lest he should send other troops to overwhelm Rosecrans, led to constant demonstrations of a further advance by the right of the army, until, in accordance with orders from Washington, the movement was suspended, and the Eleventh and Twelfth Corps were detached and sent to join the army of the Cumberland.

Between the 15th and 17th the Second Corps extended itself along the Rapidan, its picket line being nine miles long. Headquarters were established at Mitchell's Station, on the Orange & Alexandria Railroad; the Second Division at Summerville Ford; the Third Division extending to Crooked Run; the First Division in the centre. There was more or less picket firing between the two lines, and the duty of inspecting the outposts was not as pleasant as it sometimes is; but nothing occurred of special interest until the 5th of October, when the Second Corps was relieved by the Sixth, in its position along the Rapidan, and was withdrawn the next day to Culpepper, where it remained until the 10th.

What thereafter befell the corps will be the subject of the next chapter.

Carroll's brigade had, on the 5th of September, returned from its tour of duty, fighting Northern rebels, in New York.

The following changes among the field-officers of the corps had taken place during the months of July, August, and September.

DISCHARGED.—Colonel Henry Fowler, Sixty-third New York, July 4th; Major Harmon Hogoboom, One Hundred and Eighth New York, July 24th; Colonel

James H. Godman, Fourth Ohio, July 28th ; Colonel Joseph Snyder, Seventh West Virginia, September 7th ; Major James B. Morris, Seventh West Virginia, September 7th ; Major John W. Reynolds, One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania, September 19th ; Major Andrew Caraher, Twenty-eighth Massachusetts, September 22d.

RESIGNED.—Lieutenant-Colonel Amos Stroh, Eighty-first Pennsylvania, July 22d ; Colonel Dwight Morris, Fourteenth Connecticut, August 14th.

DISMISSED.—Colonel William Northedge, Fifty-ninth New York.

On the 3d of October corps headquarters were notified of the President's acceptance of the resignation of Brigadier-General William Harrow, United States Volunteers.



MAJ.-GEN. GOUVERNEUR K. WARREN
In temporary command of Second Army Corps
AUGUST 12, 1863 TO MARCH 24, 1864

CHAPTER X.

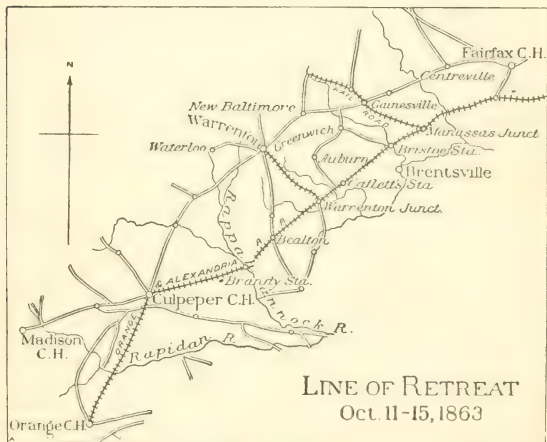
BRISTOE STATION.

DURING the first days of October, 1863, General Meade's army, as we have seen, occupied the peninsula between the Rappahannock, on the one side, and the Rapidan, with its tributary, Robertson's River, on the other, confronting Lee's army, and in a position readily to undertake an advance across the Rapidan, either direct, against Orange Court House, or by the left, toward Fredericksburg. It was, in fact, precisely the position which Grant was to occupy on the 3d of May, 1864. During the stay on the Rapidan the signal officers, having caught the key of the Confederate code, were in the habit of intercepting the communications from General Lee to his subordinates, made by flags from Clark's Mountain. These despatches, however interesting or amusing, had never proved especially instructive, until, on the afternoon of the 7th of October, a despatch to General Fitzhugh Lee from General J. E. B. Stuart, directing him to draw three days' bacon and hard bread, was caught on the wing, and, on being sent forward to headquarters, aroused General Meade's attention to the impending movement.

General Lee had, indeed, determined to take the initiative, feeling himself strong enough to turn the tables upon his adversary, in the advanced position which the Union army occupied. On the 8th General Sedgwick

reported a movement of the enemy's cavalry around our right, and the day following brought information that infantry was mingled with the columns then crossing the Upper Rappahannock. For the next twenty-four hours grave doubts existed as to General Lee's immediate purpose. It was thought that he meditated an attack upon the Army of the Potomac, in position near Culpepper Court House; then, that his columns were directed toward the Shenandoah; then, that the Confederate leader had really begun a movement upon Warrenton, on Meade's right and rear. At last, on the evening of the 10th, it was deemed sufficiently manifest that General Lee was, in fact, moving on Warrenton, to require the Union army to fall back behind the Rappahannock, which was accomplished during the 11th. The rear was covered by the cavalry, which had a sharp engagement with Stuart at Brandy Station. The almost accidental presence of a body of Confederate infantry at this point led General Pleasanton and General Sykes, whose corps, the Fifth, was nearest at hand, to suppose that the Confederate army was really being directed upon Culpepper; and consequently, at the very time when our columns should have been making their way back, on the line of the railroad, as rapidly as possible, to protect their threatened communications with Washington, General Meade, on this erroneous advice from his rear-guard, turned about, and threw the Fifth, Sixth, and Second Corps, with Buford's cavalry, again across the Rappahannock, with instructions to push forward and find and strike the enemy, if at Culpepper. These corps accordingly recrossed the Rappahannock during the afternoon of the 12th, and advanced to Brandy Station. It was soon ascertained that the Confederate army was not there or in that neighborhood. This still left the question open

where that army really was, which was settled during the evening by intelligence from General Gregg, commanding the Second Cavalry Division, that he had been driven from the Rappahannock, and pushed back for several miles, by heavy columns of infantry, crossing at Waterloo and Sulphur Springs.



There was no misunderstanding this, and the mistake which had sent three corps across the Rappahannock was to be rectified as promptly as possible. Before midnight the forces assembled around Brandy Station were in retreat. The Second Corps, which had marched from near Culpepper to Bealton on the 11th, and on the 12th had marched from Bealton to Brandy Station, again took the route for Bealton at eleven o'clock that night. As the column approached Bealton there was heard what seemed to be a rapid and persistent fire of skirmishers,

and the troops, who had already "caught on" to the general situation, at once concluded that Lee had gained our rear, and that another battle of the John Pope order was imminent. On arriving at Bealton, however, it was found that the noise was occasioned by the destruction of a large amount of small-arms ammunition, ordered by some over-zealous subordinate. The troops were tired enough to sleep at Bealton, but the time was not yet come for rest; and, indeed, the movement upon which the Second Corps had entered was to be among the most arduous in all its history. Pushing northward to the support of Gregg, Fayetteville was reached about six in the morning, and the troops were told to get their breakfast. "The halt made the evening before," says General Warren, in his official report, "but little more than sufficed for the establishment of sentinels, preparation of meals, etc., so that sleep had scarcely closed the eyes of one of the command since they awoke on the morning of the 12th." After only three-quarters of an hour, however, the order to fall in was heard, and the tired men, who had scarcely been allowed time to prepare a cup of coffee, were again summoned to the route. The day's march was long and wearisome; the distance covered was not great; but such were the delays and interruptions, due to the presence of another corps (the Third) on the road in front, and to the necessity of guarding continually against attacks upon our left flank, that it was not until nine o'clock in the evening that the corps bivouacked on the south side of Cedar Run, not far from the little village of Auburn. Thus ended the 13th of October.

The rest allowed to the troops was a very short one. General Lee was known to have been at Warrenton, close upon our left flank, General French's column of

infantry, the Third Corps, having actually encountered the Confederate cavalry, under Lomax, in making its way to Greenwich. Whether morning would find that Lee had used the hours of darkness to throw an adventurous column between our retreating army and Washington, or that he had turned his whole attention to attacking Meade's retreating army, and, if possible, cutting off its rearmost corps—in either case it behooved the Second Corps to be up and doing very early on the morning of the 14th of October, for all the other infantry corps had gone on, and the Second was, through the coming eventful day, to act as rear-guard.

Now the duty is sometimes a simple one; at times it is very perplexing and dangerous. If the enemy can advance only over the road by which the rear-guard is retreating, and if the troops and trains ahead keep moving briskly, so that the rear-guard can count upon being allowed to fall back rapidly, it is rather good fun to cover a retreat, provided there is no marked superiority in point of cavalry on the part of the following force. If, however, the enemy's cavalry are very much more powerful, or if the troops and trains ahead render necessary frequent and irregular halts, or if the enemy be moving, not by your own line of retreat, but by one nearly parallel, and at no great distance, from which they may at any time diverge in order to fasten upon the rear and assail the flank of the retreating column, the duty of the rear-guard may become embarrassing, critical, or in the highest degree dangerous. In the further narrative of the 14th of October we shall see how far the conditions were favorable or unfavorable for the performance of the service charged upon the Second Corps.

General Meade's order of the day, so far as it concerned the Second Corps, was as follows :

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
October 13, 1863, 10.30 P.M.

[CIRCULAR.]

The army will be massed at Centreville to-morrow, if practicable.

6th. General Warren, Second Corps, will move to the railroad, passing by Catlett's house; keep on the south side of the railroad; cross Bull Run at Blackburn Ford, and mass in rear of Centreville, looking toward Warrenton.

8th. As the heads of columns approach Manassas Junction and Bull Run, great caution will be observed; and at the crossing of Bull Run dispositions will be made to meet any attempt on the part of the enemy to attack in flank or dispute the passage.

9th. The movement will commence at daybreak by each corps and the reserve artillery; and the commanding general calls upon all for the utmost promptitude and despatch.

Corps commanders will keep their flankers well out on the left flank, and picket all roads coming in from that direction.

11th. General Kilpatrick will move by way of Haymarket to Sudley Springs, if practicable, and reunite with Colonel Gibbs and hold that point.

General Gregg will cover the rear and left flank of General Warren. General Buford will protect the trains.

By command of MAJOR-GENERAL MEADE.

S. WILLIAMS, *Assistant Adjutant-General.*

Half an hour later General Meade issued an additional circular, marked "confidential," of which the following is the text:

"There is good reason to believe that Lee's army is moving on our left flank—Ewell's corps by the Warrenton pike, and Hill by Salem and Thoroughfare Gap. It is hoped we are sufficiently far ahead to enable the seizure of the Centreville Heights in advance of the

enemy ; but if the movement is detected our flank and rear may be attacked, to guard against which all precautions must be taken. The supply trains will move by way of Wolf Run Shoals to Fairfax Station, and will be in striking distance if we are successful."

It will be seen that General Meade, in issuing these orders and admonitions, apprehended two sources of danger. The primary one was that the enemy, pursuing the race with the Army of the Potomac, on which they had entered and in which they had got "a start," owing to the recrossing of the Rappahannock on the 12th, might get first to Centreville Heights, and by occupying these interpose between Washington and its defenders. The second source of danger, intimated in the ninth paragraph of the 10.30 order, and strongly set forth in the "confidential" circular, was in the opportunity Lee would have, if he failed of his main purpose, or came seriously to doubt his ability to execute it, of turning sharply around, as he might at any moment do, to dash into Meade's extended column, stretched out in the great race, and either cut the Army of the Potomac in two, or fasten like a tiger upon the rearmost division and destroy it before succor could arrive. It was the last of these which the 14th of October was to see attempted.

AUBURN.

I have said that the rest allowed the troops, arriving tired at Auburn, at nine o'clock on the evening of the 13th, was a short one. The regiments were called up at between three and four o'clock, and at the very break of day, amid a heavy fog, were on their way to cross Cedar Run at the village of Auburn, described by Stuart's biographer as a "little hamlet, consisting of the residence of

Stephen McCormick, a post-office, and a blacksmith's shop." The line of the Second Corps march was, for the first mile or two, that is, until Cedar Run should be crossed, actually toward and not away from the enemy; while for two or three hundred yards, just before the crossing, the road skirted the foot of a precipitous and wooded hill, on the other side of which ran the road coming down to the ford from Warrenton, the ford being common to the two roads. Beyond the crossing the road again forked, the left-hand branch winding around the base of a bald and tolerably prominent ridge, while the right-hand road bore sharply off to the southeast toward Catlett's Station. The latter was the destined route of the Second Corps; the former had been followed by the Third Corps, the night before, on its way to Greenwich. The crossing itself was particularly difficult, on account of the extreme steepness of the hills leading down to the creek and the narrowness of the path.

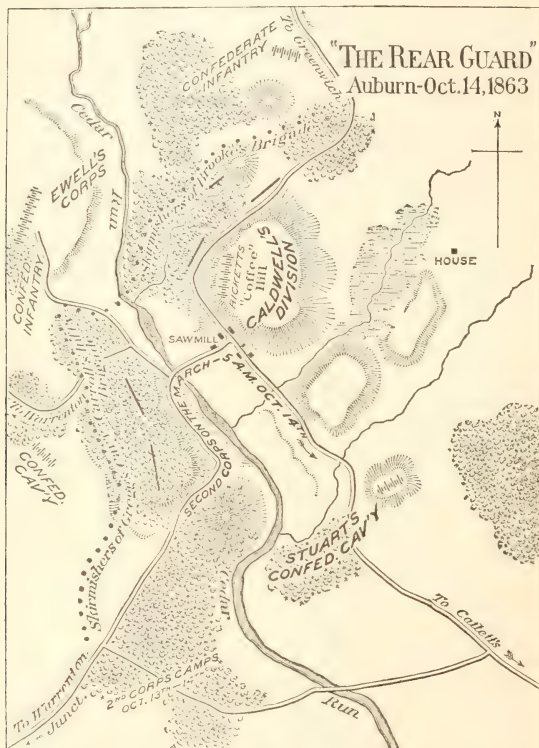
General Warren was well aware of the disadvantages of encamping, as he had done, on the south side of Cedar Run; but he had felt that there was no alternative, the single ford being occupied by the troops of the Third Corps till long after the weary men of the Second had dropped on the ground senseless from fatigue. The situation had caused him great anxiety during the night, and made him particularly urgent to be off in the early morning. Promptly, however, as the Second Corps had risen for its severe labors of the 14th of October, the Confederates were not long after them. Even while the leading division of the corps, Caldwell's, was crossing Cedar Run, the skirmishers of Gregg's cavalry division, which had been assigned to the duty of covering the left and rear of the Second Corps during the coming day, were rapidly driven in by the cavalry of the enemy,

pushed out from Warrenton. It was of great importance that the passage of the infantry should not be delayed for any trifling cause, and General Warren therefore requested Gregg to hold his line stiffly against all comers. But soon the pressure became more severe, and the presence of Confederate infantry was detected on that flank. This, in the situation, was a serious matter, since the cavalry had not far to retire before uncovering the road by which the trains, consisting of one hundred wagons and one hundred and twenty-five ambulances, were now passing the ford. As Gregg felt the ground slipping from beneath his feet, under the increasing pressure of the enemy coming down the Warrenton road, he had no choice but to appeal for infantry support. Although regretting the delay thus occasioned, General Warren at once sent Carroll's brigade, which had during the night been guard to the trains, to Gregg's assistance. The dense fog, still enveloping everything in the most oppressive manner, made it exceedingly difficult for commanders or staff to get the necessary outlook, and even to communicate orders or receive reports.

While Gregg, supported by Carroll, was thus engaged in "standing off," first the Confederate cavalry, and then the infantry of Rodes' division of Ewell's corps, advancing upon the left and rear of the Second Corps column, from the direction of Warrenton, a new danger, breaking forth suddenly, in an altogether unexpected quarter, menaced the Second Corps, for a brief half-hour, with absolute destruction. Probably never during the Rebellion was any considerable body of troops more strangely beset. It was this unlooked-for encounter which has given Auburn a name, though not a great one, in the history of the war.

The form which this new danger took was as follows:

Caldwell's division, having crossed Cedar Run, was halted, with the batteries of Ricketts, Arnold, and Ames,



while Hays' division took the advance on the road. Brooke's brigade was thrown out to cover the angle

made by the Catlett's Station road turning so sharply to the southeast. On the right two companies of the Sixty-fourth New York were deployed as skirmishers, facing almost north up the road to Greenwich; then came the Fifty-seventh New York, partly deployed and partly in reserve; then, on the left, the Second Delaware, facing west and northwest; the One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania and eight companies of the Sixty-fourth New York being in support of the line thus formed. The remainder of Caldwell's division, with the batteries, occupied the hill, which we described as "a bald and tolerably prominent ridge," lying between the road to Greenwich and that to Catlett's Station. The latter troops then, finding themselves with a little time on their hands, very generally began to make coffee, which the early start of the morning had not permitted them to do.

While thus engaged in their domestic duties, a bolt, out of what was anything but a clear sky, brought every man to his feet. Through the mist, from adown the road to Catlett's, the very line of our communication with the rest of the army, the destined avenue of our escape, were seen flashes in quick succession, and the rush of shells was heard, followed by the sharp crack which told that the fuses had done their deadly work. The First Division, massed upon the hill, which was literally packed, presented to the battery, thus terribly unmasked, such a mark as few gunners ever had offered to them. For the instant there was a good deal of excitement, and of course some confusion, among Caldwell's men, who ran instantly to arms, while the unexpected foe made the most of his opportunity by a rapid and well-directed fire.

Who was this enemy thus appearing in a quarter where

only friends were to be looked for, and barring the road by which the Second Corps was to retreat? The presence of this force, in such a place, at such a time, constitutes one of the curiosities of warfare. It was the famous General J. E. B. Stuart, with two brigades, Funsten's and Gordon's, of his cavalry, and seven pieces of artillery, under Major Beckham, caught by accident the previous evening between two columns of the Union army. Finding himself hemmed in on all sides, Stuart had hidden his force away in dense pine-woods along the road from Auburn to Catlett's. He did not dare to attempt to break out at night, not knowing in which direction he might find his enemies strongest; and so he waited, very quietly it may be believed, until morning. It is said that his fireless bivouac was close to the headquarters of General Meade, and that, had he known of that proximity, the daring raider might have crowned his exploits by carrying to Richmond the commander of the Army of the Potomac, with the laurels of Gettysburg still unfaded upon his brows. But this was not to be. For the time General Stuart, like his great civil chieftain, only wanted "to be let alone." With morning, however, came fresh audacity. The road to Catlett's was, for a distance at least, open behind him, Buford's cavalry having moved away from it toward Wolf Run Shoals; while cross-roads and wood-paths, known to his officers and men, afforded a way out of what had seemed, the night before, a perfect trap. With this discovery hope revived; and though the sound of moving troops and trains, which came from nearly every side, made Stuart anxious to see his way more clearly, he was ready to strike a blow before leaving, and so go off with glory. It would appear, also, from Major McClellan's memoirs of Stuart, published since these lines were written, that that chieftain had a

more serious purpose in availing himself of his highly peculiar position, thinking that, should Ewell press heavily from the other side, while he himself threw his two cavalry brigades upon the rear of the Union force, it might even be destroyed. However serious or jocose Stuart's purpose, his regiments were drawn up across the road from Auburn to Catlett's, fronting the former place ; his guns were put into battery, and the Confederates awaited events. Suddenly either the breaking of the mist or the lighting up of the great fog-banks by the fires of the coffee-makers discovered to the straining eyes of the Confederates the position of Caldwell. Instantly their cannoneers sprang to their guns, and a score of shells were sent hissing among the quivering masses of the First Division.

But there was something on that field which Stuart and his cannoneers had not seen, either directly or by reflection from the mist. Nearer than they reckoned were the avengers of the dead of "Coffee Hill." Hays' division, which had taken the road from Caldwell, was already on the march to Catlett's, and the missiles intended for the First Division flew over the heads of his men. Of the proximity of Hays' troops Stuart, whether because the fog, which was now rapidly lifting, still concealed the road up which Hays was marching, or because his attention was absorbed by the tempting opportunity afforded by the massed division on the ridge, was not conscious.

Astonished and amazed as was the commander of the Third Division at this fire breaking forth adown the road which he had every reason to suppose was held by friends, it was nothing of that size or shape which could daunt the mind or paralyze the arm of Alexander Hays. Quick as thought he dashed to the front ; and while Caldwell was drawing his men to the reverse side of the ridge, and

Ricketts' Pennsylvania battery was coming into action against Stuart, the One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York, Lieutenant-Colonel Bull, was deployed as skirmishers, supported by the Twelfth New Jersey, Lieutenant-Colonel Davis, and pushed against the unknown enemy. What might be the force thus encountered, whether in numbers or in character, General Hays could, of course, form no conjecture. This was exactly what he proposed to find out, and that, too, in the shortest possible time.

Hays' skirmishers advanced rapidly to their work. Unused to encounter cavalry they yet did not shrink from attacking the compact line they saw formed across the road, but pushed forward to close quarters, and opened a sharp fire upon horses and men. Right gallantly the enemy essayed to charge, and even drove the skirmishers back upon the Twelfth New Jersey, which, in line of battle, poured in a withering fire that speedily sent the horsemen to the right about with no small loss. Among those who fell was Colonel Thomas Ruffin, First North Carolina Cavalry.

At last, Stuart, seeing Hays' line of battle rapidly developing in his front, concluded that he had played the game as long as it was safe; and, putting his horses at a gallop, went down the road toward Catlett's. Hays' skirmishers, pushing forward, ascertained, to the great relief of the officers and men of the Second Corps, that no infantry force stood behind these audacious challengers.

I say to their great relief, for the brief space which intervened since Stuart's guns opened fire had been one of much anxiety. If two thousand Confederates could be there, why not five thousand? Why not ten? And if so much as two brigades of Confederate infantry, in ad-

dition to Stuart's cavalry, had, that morning, interposed between the Second Corps and Catlett's, with Ewell's divisions attacking its left and rear, the corps might have been destroyed. As it was, the delay encountered gave a dangerous opportunity to Ewell to further enwrap the column with his superabundant brigades; for, let it be borne in mind throughout this narrative, while the Second Corps was that day less than one-sixth of Meade's infantry, Ewell had with him one-half of Lee's, and we now know that it was all concentrated the night before at Warrenton. In such a situation the unexpected interposition of Stuart's brigades upon our line of retreat was not only a strange but an embarrassing circumstance. Not only did Stuart's interference, by checking the movement of the Second Corps, afford Ewell additional time for enwrapping Meade's rear-guard, but it served to heighten the ardor of his attack.¹ The Confederates had been informed, by disguised messengers sent through our lines, of Stuart's strange predicament, the night before; and, as Stuart's artillery gave the signal, the Confederate guns attached to the infantry broke out into fury. A powerful battery, supposed to be Jones' battalion of sixteen pieces, among them some twenty-

¹ This does not agree with the view of Stuart's biographer, who complains that "as the fire of Stuart's guns, which were served with intensest energy, continued and increased, the fire of the infantry, on the opposite side, diminished to a weak skirmishing." Such was not the opinion of those who stood between Stuart and Ewell, and had the best opportunity to hear, see, and feel what either of the bodies of Confederates were doing. I don't say that Ewell did all he might. Throughout the day the Confederates seemed to me unusually tardy in their movements; but the force of the attack certainly increased rather than diminished from first to last—that is, until the time when the Second Corps fell back from Auburn.

pounders, opened from the direction of Warrenton, and even farther around to the south, gallantly replied to by Arnold's "A," First Rhode Island, which, having been in action against Stuart, had literally executed the order—seldom, if ever, heard except on the drill-ground—"Fire to the rear! Limbers and caissons, pass your pieces!" The shells of still another Confederate battery, which had got around upon the Greenwich road, flew in a direction exactly opposite to that taken by the shells leaving Stuart's guns. Meanwhile the infantry of Rodes' division was pressing so hard upon our skirmish line that another quarter-hour must have brought on an engagement between the lines of battle. It for a time seemed very much as if the Second Corps, through no fault of its own, was caught in a trap, and would be baited to death by its exulting enemies. The closeness with which the corps was environed may be judged from the fact that shot from Stuart's guns passed clear over our troops, and fell among the advancing lines of Ewell on the other side, actually checking their advance—at least so Major McClellan states.

The disappearance of Stuart removed that feature of the situation which had been, for the moment, appalling. General Warren knew well enough that the Second Corps could be relied upon to give account of many more than its own numbers, while retreating down a clear road. No sooner, then, did Hays report the way open, than Webb, with the Second Division, took the advance to Catlett's; Hays fell in behind; Gregg and Carroll were told that they might abandon the ground they had so stubbornly contested; Caldwell's men, marching off the hill where they had already buried the bodies of eleven of their comrades, assumed the defence of the column adown the road, while Gregg's regiments

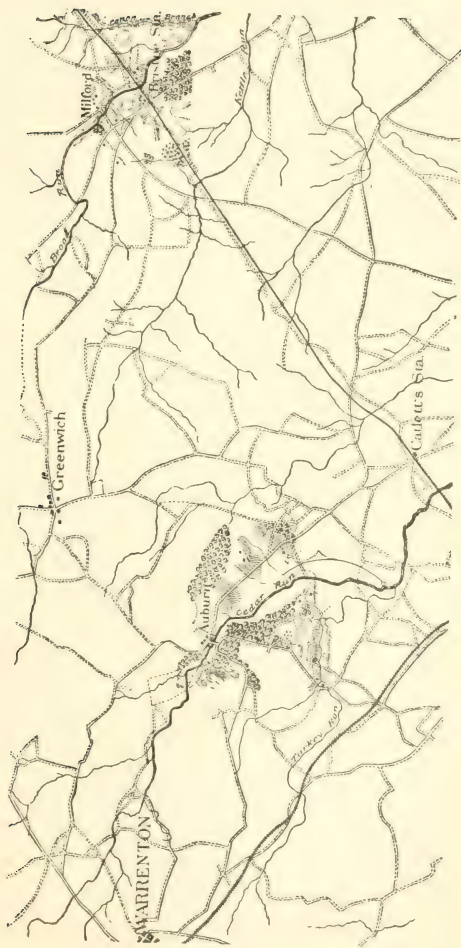
disappeared through the woods to protect the flanks. Everyone was perfectly well disposed to march, and there was, for the nonce, no complaint as to the pace set by the head of the column.

So long had been the delay, however, that the withdrawal of Brooke's brigade was a matter of no small difficulty. Lieutenant-Colonel Chapman, commanding the Fifty-seventh New York, found that, through the premature retreat of a portion of the cavalry, the enemy had already interposed between him and the rest of the brigade, but by making a wide detour to the right, under a severe fire, was enabled to get through. Lieutenant Anderson, the ambulance officer of the division, exhibited here the greatest enterprise in removing even the wounded of this running fight, loading his ambulances under fire, and at last carrying off a wounded man on his saddle out from the very hands of the enemy.

From every direction, now, Ewell's skirmishers were felt rapidly following up the corps. But little we recked so long as the road was clear in front. Brooke was on the skirmish line, and that gallant soldier, who had few equals in this trying position—impetuous, cool, and masterful—struck out right and left at the enemy whenever they proved too saucy. In order to give ample time to clear the road for future contingencies, General Warren directed Hays and Webb to push rapidly on to Catlett's with the trains and the greater part of the artillery, while he himself posted Caldwell's division on an excellent natural position about two miles from Auburn. Line of battle was accordingly formed by the infantry across the road to Catlett's, while that brigade of Gregg's cavalry which had followed the infantry across Cedar Run at Auburn took post on the right (looking, of course, to the rear), and the other brigade of the cavalry division, under

Colonel Irwin Gregg, which had crossed Cedar Run about two miles and a half below Auburn, now came in and joined the infantry on the left. Here General Warren sought at once to gain time to clear the road ahead for a rapid retreat if required, and also to cause Ewell to develop his purposes—whether to follow us to Catlett's, or to move off to his own left toward Greenwich. Guns were run out at various points to fire into the woods, where the enemy's skirmishers were pressing Brooke, and a brave show of force was made, especially upon the wings; the skirmish line was heavily reinforced, and excited to renewed activity and audacity; the aggressive was assumed at points, and dashes were made upon the enemy's skirmishers. Whether deceived by these demonstrations into supposing that the Union force on the Catlett's road was greater than it really was, or in pursuance of a plan agreed upon between himself and General Hill, Ewell, after feeling Caldwell's position along its entire length, moved off to his left, and disappeared in the direction of Greenwich.

So soon as the enemy were seen to have abandoned direct pursuit the line of battle was broken up, and Caldwell's troops were again put in motion. With the exception of six or seven hours' rest at Auburn, the troops had been almost continuously on the road or in line of battle since the morning of the 12th, having started out with ammunition both in the boxes and in the knapsacks, and with five days' rations on the person in addition to the ordinary average of equipments. All the diminution that had occurred in this heavy burden had been through the ammunition expended at Auburn, and in the hard-tack and salt pork eaten at two or three hurried halts, or gnawed and nibbled by the hungry troops upon the march; but, for all that, the brigades filed rapidly and



in good form into the road, and again took up the route.

And so, though footsore and weary, Caldwell's soldiers trudge manfully onward under their heavy burdens. An hour moves slowly by; Catlett's is reached. Here Webb's and Hays' divisions are found in positions selected by Colonel Morgan; the trains of the corps, joined by the wagons of Gregg's cavalry, have passed to the rear, directed upon Centreville, via Wolf Run Shoals, with Colonel Baxter's Pennsylvania brigade of the Second Division as guard. Upon the arrival of Caldwell the whole corps is put upon the march up the railroad toward Bristoe.

While on the road from his last position to Catlett's, General Warren received the following despatch from General Humphreys. [The Italics are my own.]

BRISTOE, October 14, 1863, 12 M.

MAJOR-GENERAL WARREN,

Commanding Second Corps.

The Major-General commanding directs me to say that the road is entirely clear beyond this point. General Kilpatrick, at Buckland's Mills, reports that the enemy's infantry are massing on the Warrenton pike.¹ General Kilpatrick will leave Buckland's Mills at twelve o'clock. Move forward as rapidly as you can, as *they may send out a column from Gainesville to Bristoe. General Sykes is directed to keep up communication with you, and to keep in supporting distance. The road is all clear for Sykes also. French is directed to keep up communication with Sykes, and within supporting distance. Sykes will remain here until you are up.*

A. A. HUMPHREYS,

Major-General, Chief of Staff.

You are not to protect anything but your own train. Push it forward.

¹ This erroneous statement of General Kilpatrick had much to do with causing the complications which ensued.

“Notwithstanding,” says General Warren, “the assurances of finding our own forces at Bristoe, and the arrangement I had made with General Gregg to watch my flank with his cavalry, every precaution was taken, in putting the troops in motion for Catlett’s Station, to move them along the railroad in a proper disposition for battle. General Webb’s division, with two batteries of artillery, took the northwest side of the railroad; General Hays, the southeast side; the ambulances and artillery of General Gregg’s cavalry followed, and General Caldwell’s division continued to protect the rear. This was done expeditiously, and the troops moved off rapidly. Lieutenant-Colonel Morgan accompanied the advance of the Second and Third Divisions, to select a position at Bristoe and cover our crossing at Broad Run.”

BRISTOE STATION.

We have seen the column put in motion from Catlett’s toward Bristoe. Step by step the ground is measured off by the weary troops, under their unusual burdens. It is nearly three o’clock—Warren, with his staff, is riding at the rear of the column, watching for the possible re-appearance of Ewell; when suddenly, from up the track, at the distance of two miles, breaks forth a furious cannonade. Has Sykes, then, been attacked at Bristoe, while awaiting our arrival? The spurs are sharply pressed on the flanks of the horses; and the young commander dashes out of the road, that he may not hinder the troops or be hindered by them, and, through brush and timber, makes his way at a furious gallop to the front. Kettle Run, a mile and a half from Bristoe, is reached; one or two desperate plunges, and it is crossed; the bank is gained, and in a brief moment

the staff burst out from the bushes upon the plain of Bristoe. Here a sight greets their eyes which might appall older soldiers.

That we should understand the array of Confederate brigades which there, unopposed, were moving down to seize the crossing of Broad Run, and cut the Second Corps off from the Army of the Potomac, let us go forward and see how General Meade's instructions of twelve o'clock were carried out. General Sykes, with the Fifth Corps, had duly arrived at Milford, on Broad Run, just above Bristoe, and covering it; and here he remained awhile, most reluctantly, awaiting the arrival of the Second Corps, which, as we have seen, had been detained—first, at Auburn, by the skirmish with Ewell and the unexpected intervention of Stuart across the road to Catlett's, and then, to gain time for the crossing of the trains at Wolf Run Shoals. General Sykes had looked upon Warren's delay with great impatience, being eagerly desirous of hastening on to Centreville, whither he believed Lee's columns were directed. Mindful, in part, however, of General Meade's warning¹ that a Confederate column might be sent down from Gainesville to Bristoe, and of his orders to stay there until the Second Corps should arrive, General Sykes remained, torn by conflicting impulses. At two o'clock he sent the following despatch to General Warren:

¹ "General Sykes was now directed not to move until the Second Corps came up; and orders were sent to the Third Corps (next in advance of the Fifth) to halt until the Fifth Corps began to move. By this arrangement it was expected to have three corps available to meet any force of the enemy that might be encountered here (at Bristoe). General Warren was advised of these instructions." Humphreys: *Gettysburg to the Rapidan*, p. 24.

HEADQUARTERS, FIFTH ARMY CORPS,
October 14, 1863, 2 P.M.

GENERAL WARREN :

French is on Manassas Heights ; and I am at Bristoe,¹ waiting to see the head of your column. I shall move on the moment I see it. There is a long interval between French and I (*sic*), which I ought to close up as soon as possible. Are you delayed by anything? Let me hear from you.

Yours respectfully,

GEORGE SYKES, *M.G.*

Shortly after this despatch was sent, General Sykes was informed by his aid-de-camp, Lieutenant Snyder, Third United States Infantry, that the Second Corps was coming. So it was, and so was Christmas. The writer heard it said at the time, although he has never been able to verify the statement, that Lieutenant Snyder had mistaken a squadron of the First Massachusetts Cavalry for the head of the Second Corps column. However this may have been, General Sykes, receiving a report, made in undoubted good faith, that Warren was coming with his corps, put his own troops in motion for Centreville. Already the whole of the Fifth Corps had had time to stretch itself out upon the route, leaving only the rear of its column still in view from Bristoe, when the head of A. P. Hill's corps—which Lee had, from the first, directed, not upon Centreville at all, but upon the crossing of Broad Run by the Orange & Alexandria

¹ General Sykes' own letter to General Warren, on the 30th of October, speaks of his corps as being "massed at Milford," and states that his aid-de-camp, Lieutenant Snyder, Third United States Infantry, "was sent to the vicinity of Bristoe," to give notice when the head of Warren's column should arrive. In one sense, General Sykes was at Bristoe—that is, his position at Milford covered Bristoe perfectly.

Railroad—came out upon the hills from which Milford could be seen on the left, Bristoe in front.

Of Bristoe it may be said that it was of even less importance, if possible, as a seat of residence, than Auburn. The village, big or little, which had once given name to the place had disappeared; only a few "burnt chimneys" remained to show where once it stood. One insignificant house on the right (south) side of the stream, known on the map as "Dodd's," constituted the sole human feature of the scene. This stood on the right of the road running from Brentsville to Gainesville, about one hundred yards north of the railroad. The ground on the right, or south, bank of Broad Run, is more than usually diversified, a number of humpy hillocks affording considerable relief from the plain and good positions for artillery.

Heth's division is in the advance of Hill's corps. Heth looks toward Bristoe, and sees no Union force confronting him. The Army of the Potomac has, then, escaped! He looks off to his left, and there, across the plain, a mile or so away, he sees, with arms stacked, the last brigade of the Fifth Corps. That, then, is the rear-guard of the Potomac army, and the prize is lost! Quickly he orders Poague to place a battery in position to rake the retreating column, and hastens to throw his leading brigade (Walker's) across the stream in sharp pursuit, while Cooke and Kirkland prepare to follow.

It is the sound of Poague's guns opening on the rear of the Fifth Corps which so startled Warren as he rode with the rear-guard, and which brought him at such a pace to the head of the column. But, fast as the staff moves, before it has reached the open ground at Bristoe answering guns are heard, and the Confederates no longer have the music to themselves. It is the well-known, long-proved B, First Rhode Island, under Fred. Brown,

back from his Gettysburg wounds, which tells Heth that he is not to have it all his own way.

For, while Heth is deploying Walker's, Cooke's, Kirkland's, and Davis' brigades to assail the rear of the Fifth Corps, the head of the Second Division under General Webb, weakened by the detachment of Baxter's brigade, which has accompanied the trains, is crossing Kettle Run a mile and a half away. The men, weighed down with unusual burdens, worn with loss of sleep and the almost utter absence of cooked food for two days, are toiling along without a thought, on their part or on that of their commanders, that they are about to be thrown into the immediate presence of an enemy in full array of battle. Sykes is supposed to be holding the ground in front of them, against any possible appearance of the enemy. And so Webb is pursuing his way up the left side of the railroad; when, first, the sound of Poague's fire upon the Fifth Corps, across the run, and then a report that skirmishers of the enemy have been seen upon his own left, put him on his guard, not a minute too soon. Webb turns his column across the railroad to get on the south side. This, for the time, cuts the path of Hays' division, which has been moving in parallel column, and gives Webb the lead. As the latter clears the edge of a bit of woods, which here comes down to the railroad, he sees a Confederate battery already in position on his left, commanding the whole of the open ground at Bristoe; and instantly the sharp rattle of musketry tells that the flanking regiment, the First Minnesota, has encountered the skirmishers of the enemy. There is now no room for doubt that a fight, and a smart one, is at hand.

A pretty to do it is! A moment more discloses the Confederate infantry forming upon the crest on the left, to advance against the flank of our column. Those are

the brigades of Cooke and Kirkland, coming fast into line to face the railroad instead of the stream; while Poague's pieces, diverted from their practice upon the rear of the Fifth Corps column, are galloping into battery on a new line, to turn their fire upon Webb, who, discerning the importance of securing the crossing of Broad Run, moves at double-quick toward the ford.

Brown's B, First Rhode Island, was marching literally at the very head of the column. Upon the discovery of the enemy, the bugle cry, "Cannoneers, mount!" rings out, and, with "trot, march!" the battery dashes across the plain, goes splashing through Broad Run, and comes at once into action from the other side. The race has been a sharp one, with the Confederates moving squarely down on Webb's flank; but Webb gets to the stream, and even crosses the Eighty-second New York, to hold the opposite bank with Brown, while he faces his remaining regiments to the left to meet the impending blow.

But surely the sound of this artillery contest, suddenly springing up on the lately peaceful banks of Broad Run, will call back the Fifth Corps!

The very first gun of Poague's artillery told certain things:

1st. That there was little probability of an attempted concentration of Lee's army at Centreville, in advance of the Union army.

2d. But if Lee, while reaching out to Centreville with one hand, was attempting with the other to seize Bristoe, it was as plain as day that it behooved the troops of the Potomac army farthest to the rear to fall, with all their

force, upon the detachment sent to Bristoe, both because this would be the most effective means of causing the recall of the Centreville column to its assistance, and because, should the Bristoe column be badly defeated, the Centreville column would thereby be placed in jeopardy.

3d. If, on the other hand, the appearance of the enemy at Bristoe signified, what appeared to be its plain construction, that Lee was not trying to reach Centreville at all, but was doing what Meade's "confidential" circular of 11 P.M., of the 13th, indicated as not unlikely to be attempted—namely, turning in upon the line of march of the Potomac army, to cut off its rearmost divisions—then, indeed, the reasons for the return of the Fifth Corps to Bristoe became of terrible urgency.

As a matter of history, however, the Fifth Corps did not at once return to Broad Run upon the Second Corps being attacked in the place itself had thus prematurely abandoned. On the contrary, the pace of the rear division was only quickened by the fire from the Confederate guns; and before the first men of the Second Corps came upon the field of Bristoe the last of the Fifth had passed out of sight, leaving one corps, and that the smallest of the Union army, to fight its battle unaided, against all the troops which Lee could bring up before nightfall.

I have no wish to reflect on General Sykes' motives. No one could have served long in the Army of the Potomac without learning that George Sykes was an honorable, brave, and resolute soldier, who never meant to do anything less than his full duty, and who was ever fearless in executing his trust as he understood it. His assertions—that he did not hear the sound of the conflict at Bristoe, did not even know that his own rear was

fired into, and that he supposed Warren was all the time moving, like himself, on Centreville, until he received intelligence of the result of the Second Corps' encounter with Hill—must be accepted without challenge. As to the premature withdrawal from Broad Run, it can only be said that Sykes, a slow, painstaking, persistent man, had wrought himself into such a conception of the supreme necessity of making haste in getting to Centreville that, for the time, he could see, hear, and think of nothing else. Meade's warning about the danger of a column being sent down from Gainesville to Bristoe had fallen idly on his ears. His one thought was Centreville, Centreville, Centreville! And even after learning that Warren had been engaged, had captured guns and prisoners, he insisted that it could only have been some small force which Warren had encountered, and that the great object was still to get to Centreville.¹

Return we, then, to the Second Corps, left out on the south side of Broad Run alone, with only Gregg's cavalry in support, to encounter the whole fury of the enemy; for, as a matter of fact, not one of Lee's infantry brigades had

¹ There are, among General Warren's papers, two despatches from General Sykes, written after the Second Corps fight. The hours of writing are not given. One reads: "It is everything that the army should be concentrated at Centreville. I think you ought to move toward Manassas as soon as dark, if not before. The longer you delay, the more force they can bring against you; and if Lee's army is on your left, *two* corps are little better than one." In the other General Sykes says: "I understand there are but few infantry opposed to you. If so, of course you can manage them with your corps."

attempted to cross that stream—excepting only Walker's, at Milford, in pursuit of Sykes—and all were now being directed against the smallest of the five corps of the Union army, which was coming up the railroad to Bristoe.

We left Brown's battery, which had crossed Broad Run, opening upon Poague's artillery from the Confederate left flank; while Webb's somewhat straggled regiments, just emerged from Kettle Run, after a march of almost unparalleled fatigue, beheld two full lines of battle advancing against them from the direction of Greenwich. Colonel Morgan, the inspector-general of the corps, was, at this moment, at the head of the column, having gone to the front in the expectation of meeting General Sykes at Bristoe, and receiving from him there information and suggestions regarding the position. Upon Webb and Morgan, therefore, was thrown the responsibility of the first steps toward meeting this unexpected danger.

Their decision was to throw the two brigades of the Second Division present—the First, under Colonel Francis E. Heath, of the Nineteenth Maine, the Third, under Colonel J. E. Mallon, Forty-second New York—upon a ridge to the south of the railroad, and distant from it about three hundred yards; and this formation was in progress, the Eighty-second New York having been recalled from the other bank, when Warren dashed at a gallop into the open. His quick intelligence, his falcon eye, his trained engineering sense, instantly took in the whole field; and hardly could he turn in his saddle, before he shouted to his adjutant-general, "Tell General Hays to move by the left flank, at the double-quick, to the railroad cut!"

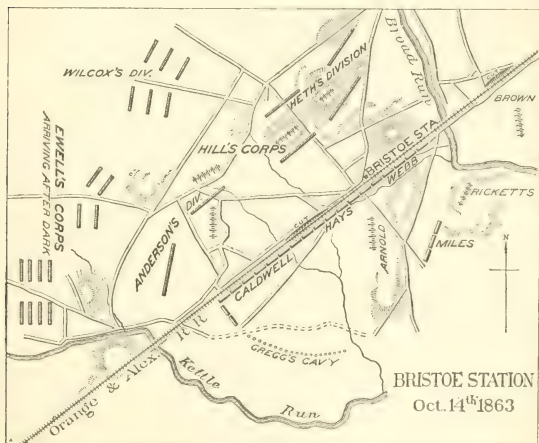
The order scarcely required to be repeated, for already

Hays was at Warren's side, sword in hand. "By the left flank; double-quick; railroad cut!" rang sharply out in three voices at once, and was taken up by the colonels of the leading regiments of Owen's brigade which was moving at the head of Hays' division. There was no time—there was no need—to send orders "through the regular channels." Every eye, when once attention was called to it, saw the immense advantage offered by the line of the railroad, which from Broad Run ran southwestward, over an embankment of varying height, for six hundred yards, to the point where the road from Brentsville to Gainesville crossed at grade. Here, and in the immediate vicinity, right and left, the shelter was small; but as the railroad ran still farther southwestward the embankment rose again to a height of several feet, and continued, with two interruptions by "cuts," to afford excellent cover for troops. Up behind this admirable intrenchment dashed the brigade of Heath, which had been longest on the ground, occupying a space extending from about two hundred yards short of the stream to near the Brentsville road; here joined them the Forty-second New York, of Mallon's brigade. On the other side of the road fell in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Massachusetts, the Seventh Michigan, and the Fifty-ninth New York; while the brigade of Owen, now coming upon the plain, faced to the left and ran for the railroad, in almost perfect order, under a shower of balls.

There was literally not a moment to be lost. The brigades of Cooke and Kirkland, with colors advanced, with Davis' and Walker's brigades covering their flanks, had already charged more than half way down the hill toward the railroad when they were first met by the fire of Webb's men.

The line of fire was, at the opening, much shorter than

the line of the enemy; but, as regiment after regiment dashed forward, with loud shouts, and took position in the cut or behind the embankment, that fire spread rapidly from right to left, and when Hays' brave fellows were in place our line overlapped the front of the charging column, while Brown's battery, from beyond the run, and Ricketts' Pennsylvania battery, which had made its



way at a gallop through the throng of infantry to the ridge above mentioned, back from the railroad, near the stream, poured in a rapid and most effective fire. "It is conceded," says General Morgan, "that the finest artillery practice in the experience of the corps was witnessed here." A few minutes later Arnold's Rhode Island battery (A), breaking through the bushes, went into action behind Owen's brigade. Thus far, it had been simply a question of five minutes. Had that time been lost, the

Confederates would have seized the railroad; and the Union troops would have been fortunate to have so much as formed line of battle on the ridge to the south, abandoning the crossing of Broad Run to the enemy, who, with Anderson's division already advancing against our left, would soon have seized the crossing of Kettle Run, which, with Caldwell's division and Carroll's brigade, still to come up, would have meant little less than the complete destruction of the corps. As it was, the five minutes saved, the railroad seized, and our troops, to the number of about three thousand, esconced in the railroad cut or behind the embankment, it was still a question whether the advance of the enemy could be checked. Right gallantly they press forward in the face of a withering fire. If a battle-flag drops from one hand, it is instantly seized and held aloft by another.

Already they have reached Dodd's house, near the track, without halting or breaking, and still they come on. Warren, Webb, and Hays, with their staffs, among whom are conspicuous Mitchell, Bingham, and Haskell, gallop up and down along the track, encouraging the men with cheers mingled with imprecations—which, let us hope, the troops hear, and the recording angel judiciously does not. Upon the line the gallant Mallon, colonel of the "Tammany" regiment, to-day commanding Webb's Third Brigade, sets an example of heroic bravery. His own regiment for the moment falters, and a company or two fall back as the Confederates dash up onto the railroad track, at the crossing of the Brentsville road, and leap inside the line of the brigade. Mallon springs to the front, checks the disorder, and brings his men forward in handsome style, but in the act is mortally wounded, while three of his staff are struck down. Lieutenant-Colonel Ansel D. Wass, Nineteenth Massachusetts, as-

sumes command of the brigade on Mallon's fall. While thus, for the instant, the Confederates gain the railroad at the crossing of the Brentsville road, some of their bravest spirits also reach the embankment beyond Webb's extreme right, which rests a hundred or two yards from the stream, and begin to fire down the line of Heath's brigade.

But the matter, really, has now gone far enough. Except for the momentary wavering of a company or two, the troops have kept up their fire with regularity and coolness, even the very conscripts fighting like men. There is no sign of panic at seeing the enemy in two places within our lines. The Confederates who have reached the railroad at grade, in the centre, are shot or knocked down by the men of the Forty-second. On the right, the Eighty-second New York change front, and drive out, or kill, or capture, all who have crossed the track near the run. A few men mount the embankment where it is held by the Nineteenth Maine,¹ but are instantly shot or stabbed, and the general mass of Cooke's and Kirkland's men, now at varying distances, from twenty-five to seventy-five yards from our front, halt, waver, and then fall back. Quick as thought, amid loud cheers, the men of half a dozen regiments spring across the railroad, and dash forward to gather the trophies of the fight; while, on the left, the impetuous Smyth advances his brigade—the Second, of the Third Division—in line of battle, into the woods lately held by the enemy. And soon four hundred and sixty prisoners,²

¹ Sergeant Small, of Company I, shot one Confederate at musket's length, and ran another through with his bayonet.

² It was at the time related that these men, brought into the line of the Second Division, recognised their old antagonists of Gettys-

with two colors, are brought in from under the very noses of the supporting brigades of Davis and Walker, while five of Poague's guns are drawn across the track by the rollicking skirmishers, each piece bestridden by a crowing "Yank." And so "first blood" and "first knock-down" are awarded to the Second Corps.

But although the recent peril had been escaped, or, rather, turned to victory, over which there was much noisy gratulation among the troops, the situation, as viewed by the higher officers, was a gloomy one. Cooke's and Kirkland's brigades had indeed been driven back with severe loss, including both brigade commanders; but the moment the prisoners were brought in, General Warren ascertained that all of Hill's corps was in his immediate front or fast coming up, while Ewell's continued progress toward our left and rear was reported every few minutes by messengers from the cavalry. Very soon the Second Corps alone, of all the army, would be face to face with both of Lee's grand divisions, and that, too, on the wrong side of a creek the crossing of which was, at that moment, commanded by the Confederate artillery, whose line of fire was now lengthening as McIntosh's battalion, from the artillery reserve of Hill's corps, arrived—three batteries taking position on the Confederate right, while one was sent to replace the lost guns on the left. Smyth's brigade was withdrawn from the position to which it had been advanced, on the repulse of Cooke and Kirkland, by the impetuosity of its commander, and resumed its post along the railroad.

Caldwell's division now began to arrive—Miles was sent to the extreme right of our line, to support the bat-

burg, and, on seeing the white trefoil of their captors, exclaimed, "Those damned white clubs again!"

teries; while the other brigades were placed on the left of Hays. Carroll's brigade of the latter division, which, with French's battery, had filed out of the column near Kettle Run, before the action commenced, to hold the Brentsville road against a possible irruption of Stuart's cavalry, and had thus become the rear infantry brigade, now came up—the Seventh Virginia and Fourteenth Indiana going in between the Irish brigade and Brooke, the Fourth Ohio on the left of, and perpendicular to, Brooke's line, forming a crotchet, the Eighth Ohio in reserve. The line of the Second Corps was then extended by Gregg's First Cavalry Brigade, under Colonel Taylor, along the road leading to Brentsville. This brigade had, in its hard day of almost continual skirmishing, exhausted a full supply of carbine ammunition, and had only the pistol and sabre left for defending its line.

The Second Corps was now in position, about eight thousand strong, one brigade being detached; and, having made the best dispositions it could, was compelled to await its fate. Despatches sent to General Sykes, representing the severity of the attacks sustained or threatened, had, indeed, caused a countermarch of the Fifth Corps, which, as General Warren was advised, was hastening back from the plains of Manassas to his support; but Sykes could not possibly return in season to recross Broad Run, and help the Second Corps hold its ground there. All that his advance could do was to keep the enemy from crossing Broad Run at Milford; or, in case Warren were worsted in the approaching encounter on the right bank, the presence of the Fifth Corps on the other side might help him to get off his shattered command.

But will that battle, so fearfully impending, take place? Assuredly it will, unless the Confederates are

more tardy and less aggressive than we have before found them. Everything urges them to action. It is their last chance to deal a blow at the Army of the Potomac in this series of movements; for, if unmolested until night-fall, Warren can steal away, and morning may find him behind Bull Run, with all five corps in line. The next hour must determine whether the Confederate army is to have gained anything by these forced marches, this stupendous effort to disconcert and defeat the victors of Gettysburg. Moreover, the loss already experienced—of two flags, five guns, and nearly five hundred prisoners—may be expected to sting the enemy into putting forth all their power to avenge Heth's defeat.

Time, certainly, has not been wanting to the Confederates for bringing up an overwhelming force. At half-past four o'clock, it has been more than two hours since Heth's head of column arrived in the immediate vicinity. Two divisions, Heth's and Anderson's, together far outnumbering Warren, have already been deployed in contact with the Second Corps; and eight batteries, at the least, are on the ground; Wilcox's division is also fully up and massed in rear. So much for Hill's corps. On Ewell's part the case is plain. Since ten o'clock he has had nothing to do but keep up a steady continuous march in pursuit of Warren, either on the road by which the latter retreated, or by some better route. If Ewell has not taken the road through Catlett's, it is because he has chosen to take a shorter road across country.

Indeed, at half-past four o'clock everything presaged the early commencement of a general attack, which, on all grounds that can be assigned, should have resulted in the complete destruction of the Second Corps, thus at bay. Perry and Posey, supported by the other brigades of Anderson's division, were pushed forward, on Heth's

right, against the left of Hays' division and the right of Caldwell. A sharp skirmish ensued in which Posey was mortally wounded, the third brigadier on that side who had fallen; the Confederate artillery, so near our line, on the left, that the orders given in firing were distinctly heard, swept the plain of Bristoe with a furious cannonade, from which the troops found shelter in the railroad cut or behind the embankment, leaving the full benefit to the staff, who rode over the field, with shot and shell from guns not five hundred yards away passing between man and man, beneath the horses' bellies, overhead, underfoot, everywhere, with a tedious iteration. Fortunately there was in rear of the Second Division, about half-way back toward the crest where Ricketts' battery had taken position, a deep ditch which was used as a hospital, and served to protect the wounded and the surgeons, in a measure, from the cannon fire. Hither the brave Mallon was borne, and here he breathed his last.

And now word comes in from the south that, at last, Ewell is at work upon Caldwell's front. But yet the great assault does not fall. Is it possible that Lee will forfeit a chance he may never have again, to achieve the destruction of a Union corps? Can it be that he will let the sun go down upon his own defeat? As every quarter of an hour is told off, we scarcely know whether to feel relief, or a greater dread because of the increasing numbers that may now take part in the anticipated assault. At last the sun touches the horizon just behind a long row of Confederate guns; then sinks out of sight; the short twilight of October passes quickly, with only a few flurries on the part of the cavalry and of Carroll's and Caldwell's infantry, caused by the rapid arrival of Ewell's brigades. We breathe freely once more, after

that painful suspense. It is dark, and "Bristoe Station" has passed into history. It can no longer be written that the Second Corps threw off the first attack of Heth, but was crushed beneath the gathering masses of Hill and Ewell. The corps has accomplished its difficult and perilous task; and is now at liberty to withdraw, as fast as the weary legs of the men will carry them, to join their comrades behind Bull Run. Its spirited young leader has made himself a reputation of the first class; and, though only temporarily assigned to the command, it cannot now be doubtful that he will find a place among the permanent corps commanders of the Army of the Potomac.

The victory had, as such things are computed, not been dearly bought. If to the losses of the infantry in the sudden encounter at Bristoe we add the losses at Auburn in the early morning, we have a total of 31 officers and 354 men reported killed and wounded. Two officers and 159 men, some doubtless killed or wounded, were reported missing, which, for such a day of sudden surprises, sharp skirmishing, running fights and hard marching, was wonderfully small.

The enemy's casualties had, owing to their more exposed position at Bristoe, been much greater, reaching a total of 782 officers and men killed and wounded. Allowing for the prisoners taken at Bristoe, the day's operations had cost Lee 1,244 men, including three general officers, while two colors and five guns were held as trophies by the Second Corps.

Among the Second Corps losses, however, was one painfully felt. Colonel James E. Mallon, of the Forty-

second New York, had fallen in command of Dana's old brigade. Colonel Mallon, while major of his regiment, had served as provost-marshal of the Second Corps under General Couch ; and, alike on staff duty and in command of troops, had on all occasions proved himself a gallant and capable officer, one of the best of that fast thinning, never to be recruited class, the generous and spirited young volunteers of 1861.

The staff had suffered severely, being exposed in an unusual degree. Lieutenant Michael Coste, of the Seventy-second Pennsylvania, serving on the staff of General Owen, was killed. Of Mallon's staff three had been wounded: Captain Cooper, Forty-second New York; Captain Smith, Seventh Michigan; Lieutenant W. R. Driver, Nineteenth Massachusetts. General Webb, in a letter to his wife written the next day, says he more than once ran away from his staff, to keep them out of mischief, yet two of them were wounded, Captain Wessels, judge advocate, and Captain Smith, acting assistant inspector-general.

Of the total number of 161 missing, 71 were from the brigade of Brooke, which had been engaged for several hours in skirmishing with Ewell's advance at Auburn, and had formed the rear-guard of the corps. The First Division lost 11 killed and 65 wounded, substantially all at Auburn, on skirmish or by the fire of Stuart's guns. The Second Division lost 17 killed and 101 wounded, substantially all at Bristoe, the three regiments suffering most being the Forty-second New York, which was at the point where the enemy broke through, on the centre; the Eighty-second New York, which met those of the enemy who crossed the railroad on the right; and the First Minnesota, which had been out as flankers, on the first encounter, and had shown a stubbornness rarely dis-

played in that position. The losses of the Third Division, 20 killed and 145 wounded, had been sustained in part at Auburn, where the One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York and Twelfth New Jersey encountered the Confederate cavalry, and in part at Bristoe, where the Third Brigade, which lost 12 men killed and 91 wounded, advanced to the railroad embankment under a severe fire, for which they took full payment in kind afterward.

The artillery brigade lost 2 killed and 24 wounded, the loss being very evenly distributed among the four batteries.

The following officers were killed or mortally wounded: Colonel James E. Mallon, Forty-second New York; Captain William H. Plumb, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York; Captain Charles H. Stevens, Fifteenth Massachusetts; Lieutenant Michael Coste, Seventy-second Pennsylvania; Lieutenant James T. Lowe, Twelfth New Jersey.

Great as was the relief of the Union commander when night closed down upon the field of Bristoe, all cause for anxiety had not disappeared. It was no longer in Lee's power to sweep down from the west and from the south, with superior force, and drive the Second Corps in disorder from the railroad, to be captured or destroyed almost entire. It was, indeed, not in his power to prevent the retreat of the Union troops under the cover of darkness. But it was in his power to set up a fire from his numerous artillery which should make a withdrawal a most unpleasant and dangerous business. Moreover, should an exploding shell have shown the

corps in retreat, it was in the caissons and limber-boxes of Hill's batteries to make the plain shriek with a cannonade so fierce as to throw a column marching by the flank into the direst disorder, for the bravest men must cringe under a rapid fire of artillery in the darkness.

It was in view of such possibilities that General Warren gave the most punctilious instructions as to the withdrawal from the railroad embankment and cut. Until the troops were fairly across Broad Run no word of command was to be spoken above a whisper ; each man was to keep his hand upon his cup and canteen that these might not rattle ; and thus, in ghostly silence, the corps was to steal away, marching by the flank across the enemy's front, within three hundred yards of their skirmishers and half-cannon range of their smooth-bore guns.

Never will the writer of these lines forget the sights, the sounds, and the queer sensations of those hours of the early evening, when, slowly riding down the railroad, he saw each regiment, in its turn, quietly started on the long march that still remained to be added to the exertions of the last sixty hours. The little camp-fires of the Confederate host were burning at a hundred points, across the plain still strewn with the dead of Heth's charge, and up on the hill beyond, where new brigades were even now coming up to the expected battle of to-morrow ; the voices of the Confederate soldiers, in familiar talk around those camp-fires, the challenge of the sentinels, the low groans of the wounded, were borne on every breeze. Within the Union lines was silence and darkness ; no camp-fires showed their flickering light, no hum of voices was heard, not a cigar was lighted in the column, as eight thousand men stole away from the presence of the great army which had for hours held them at its mercy. The five captured guns were not forgot-

ten, but, having with some difficulty been furnished by Colonel Morgan with extra horses, accompanied the artillery brigade. Crossing Broad Run, partly by the ford and partly by the railroad, the infantry made their way over the great plain stretching toward Manassas, and, between three and four o'clock on the morning of the 15th, the jaded troops who, of the sixty-nine hours that had elapsed since they left Bealton on the morning of the 12th, had been in column in the road, or in line of battle, or skirmishing or fighting with the enemy more than sixty, carrying the heaviest load I have ever known troops to carry in campaign, were allowed to throw themselves upon the ground, on the left bank of Bull Run, near Blackburn's Ford, and for the time rest from their labors. Well may General Morgan say his campaign, short as it was, "was more fatiguing than that of the Seven Days on the Peninsula, since the marches were much longer."

Leaving Stony Mountain at three o'clock on the morning of the 11th, the corps had marched, through Culpepper, across the Rappahannock, to Bealton; thence, on a false report, back, on the 12th, to Brandy Station; from which it moved again, at ten o'clock in the evening, through Bealton, to Fayetteville; retracing its steps, after a short hour's halt, to march, through Bealton, to Auburn; bivouacking from nine o'clock in the evening of the 13th till between three and four in the morning of the 14th, when it again took the route, skirmishing for hours in and around Auburn and on the road to Catlett's, and in the afternoon fighting the battle at Bristoe; to resume the march, as soon as night had fairly fallen, to halt only on Bull Run, between three and four of the morning of the 15th.

For its exertions and sacrifices the corps received a gen-

erous measure of praise, alike from the country, from its comrades, and from the commander of the Army of the Potomac. The following is General Meade's order announcing the affair at Bristoe :

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
October 15, 1863.

[GENERAL ORDERS, No. 96.]

The Major-General Commanding announces to the army that the rear-guard, consisting of the Second Corps, was attacked yesterday while marching by the flank.

The enemy, after a spirited contest, was repulsed, losing a battery of five guns, two colors, and four hundred and fifty prisoners.

The skill and promptitude of Major-General Warren, and the gallantry and bearing of the officers and soldiers of the Second Corps, are entitled to high commendation.

By command of Major-General MEADE.

S. WILLIAMS, *Assistant Adjutant-General*.

General Morgan justly remarks that even the high credit which General Warren received for his conduct on this occasion did not equal his deserts, owing to facts not generally known. "General Warren had," he says, "not only to meet the enemy, but to change the formation made before he arrived on the field, and to effect this in the face of a powerful advance of the enemy. His quickness and decision inspired the corps with great confidence in him." This testimony is worth all the more because the first formation of Webb's division, to which Morgan alludes, was one in which he had himself, as Warren's staff officer, concurred. If it be asked how it happened that the Second Corps escaped annihilation on the 14th of October, it can only be answered that it was because the Confederates were slower than they often showed themselves on occasions of equal importance. General Hill was on the high ground above Bristoe more than an hour

in advance of Webb; and Heth had four brigades deployed while Webb's troops were still toiling along the road, more or less straggled by the long march and by the recent crossing of Kettle Run. There was nothing to prevent Ewell, on the other hand, from following Warren through Catlett's, up along the track, to Bristoe, advancing as fast as Warren retired, and from being up, skirmishing on Carroll's and Brooke's front, with lines of battle forming behind, by half-past four o'clock. If Ewell left the road by which the Second Corps retreated, as he did, it was only to take a shorter route, cutting off the unnecessary angle at Catlett's. A most curious feature of this case is that not only had Ewell fought Hooker on this very field, the year before, during the second Bull Run campaign, but that this was his own home country.

CHAPTER XI.

MINE RUN.

SCARCELY was the race between Lee and Meade, from Brandy Station to Centreville, October 11th to 15th, well over, when the Army of the Potomac was again called upon to go forward to the Rappahannock, justifying General Humphreys' expression of regret that the Army of the Potomac had not been formed on the 14th, along Broad Run, about Bristoe and Milford, when that general engagement, which both commanders seemed to desire but which it was yet so difficult to bring about, would surely have taken place.

The following troops had joined while the corps was on the Bull Run : One Hundred and Fifty-second New York, October 16th, assigned to First Brigade, Second Division ; Twenty-sixth Michigan, October 17th, assigned to First Brigade, First Division.

At this place the famous Battery I, First United States Artillery, so long and honorably associated with the Second Corps, was mounted and sent to join the cavalry. Its place was taken by Weir's Battery C, Fifth United States. Independent Battery C, of Pennsylvania, was also assigned to the artillery brigade.

On the 19th the corps, which had remained undisturbed except by a reconnoissance of Stuart's about noon of the 15th, during which some fiendish Hotchkiss shells were thrown into camp, moved, in the afternoon,

from Blackburn's Ford to Bristoe. The next morning, the 20th, the corps moved to Gainesville; thence to Greenwich; thence to Auburn, no enemy appearing on the line of march. During the 21st and 22d the corps stayed in camp at Auburn. On the 23d the camp was moved to the railroad crossing at Turkey Run, about midway between Warrenton and Warrenton Junction, where the troops remained a fortnight. It was camp and headquarters rumor, at this time, that General Meade had proposed a movement by the flank toward Fredericksburg, like that which Burnside had made from Warrenton almost exactly a year before, but that the project had been vetoed by the President. On the 28th of October Lieutenant-Colonel J. Albert Monroe, First Rhode Island Artillery, relieved Captain Hazard as chief of the artillery brigade. Captain Hazard resumed command of his battery.

On the 7th of November camp was broken, and the army moved to the Rappahannock—the Fifth and Sixth Corps to the Orange and Alexandria Railroad bridge; the Third and Second to Kelly's Ford, the latter passing through Warrenton Junction, Bealton, and Morrisville.

The Sixth Corps, as is well remembered, carried the works defending the railroad bridge by one of the most brilliant assaults of the war, in which fifteen hundred prisoners, six colors, and four guns were captured by the brigades of Upton and Russell. The Third Corps, on its part, effected a crossing at Kelly's Ford with little loss, securing two or three hundred prisoners. On the following morning the Second Corps crossed the river in support of the Third. General Morgan states that General Warren was exceedingly anxious that the Second and Third Corps, constituting the left column, should be pushed, with all haste and force, to Germanna Ford, up-

on the Rapidan, to prevent Lee from escaping out of the peninsula between the two rivers.

General Meade would appear to have been confident that Lee was prepared to give battle on the great plains around Brandy Station, and therefore called the Third and Second Corps over toward the right, to be in readiness to support the Fifth and Sixth Corps. Lee, however, withdrew across the Rapidan. Whether he would have been intercepted by the movement proposed by General Warren, or whether that movement would have involved undue danger to either of the two columns, we need not discuss. Certain it was that Lee's retirement was abrupt, although in good form; and that the Confederates had counted upon very comfortable winter-quarters between the two rivers. Their camps consisted of cosey and substantial huts, while the construction of corduroy roads had made considerable progress. The prisoners captured were much better clad than had been usual, many having good English blankets and shoes.

The withdrawal of Lee's army behind the Rapidan having been ascertained, the Second Corps went into camp in the vicinity of Berry Hill, near Stevensburg, with headquarters at Thom's House, a fine old mansion commanding a view of the country for miles in every direction. Here the troops rested until the 24th of November. Early on that day camp was broken, under orders to move down to the Rapidan; but at 7 A.M. those orders were countermanded in consequence of a heavy rain.

MINE RUN.

Two days later, viz., on the 26th of November, began the series of operations which have passed into history under the name of "Mine Run."

At 6.30 P.M. the Second Corps moved to Germanna Ford; the First Corps (Newton) and the Fifth Corps (Sykes) proceeding to Culpepper Mine Ford; the Third Corps (French) and the Sixth Corps (Sedgwick), to Jacobs' Mill. The Second Corps thus constituted the centre column; the First and Fifth Corps the left column; the Third and Sixth Corps the right column.

The object of this well-conceived movement was, by a rapid march, to get inside of Lee's line of defence at Mine Run, and there to bring on a fight on a fair field, with the possible added advantage of finding the two Confederate corps of Hill and Ewell so widely apart, for convenience of winter quarters, as to allow them to be beaten in detail. From the first, however, the movement was embarrassed by delays and blunders.

The Second Corps reached Germanna Ford promptly; but was there halted by General Meade, as the Third Corps, which had been expected at the upper ford, was reported behind its time. When, at last, the Second Corps was ordered forward, the ford was secured without opposition, the enemy's vedettes withdrawing rapidly. A few men from the Fourth New York Cavalry dashed across in pursuit, and a small party of infantry was thrown over, wading up to their necks in the cold water, to get possession of the opposite landing. The engineers immediately began to lay the bridges, whereupon it was found that we were "short" by one or two pontoons, as also proved to be the case at Jacobs' Mill. This was attributed to the recent rains, which had swollen the Rapidan and extended its banks. As a result of the second delay, thus experienced, night found the Second Corps advanced but four miles beyond the ford, namely, to Flat Run church, instead of Robertson's tavern as had been contemplated. The right column was

even more backward, not all the infantry being able to cross at Jacobs' Mill before morning.

Notwithstanding this unfortunate beginning, it was believed to be still possible to get in behind Mine Run before Lee could bring up anything like his whole army; and, early in the morning of the 27th, the troops were again put in motion, the Second Corps, the centre, taking a wood road across from the Germanna Plank Road to the turnpike, and then going up the latter at a swinging rate, Carroll's Westerners setting the pace.

The enemy's vedettes had been encountered at the point where the corps struck the turnpike, two miles from Robertson's tavern; but these retired rapidly before our small cavalry detachment. At about ten o'clock the head of the column arrived at Robertson's, where the sound of sharp firing came up from the swale beyond. When the staff reached the crest, the situation was found to be as follows: Down in the valley the cavalry skirmishers were exchanging shots rapidly, while, protruding from the woods half-way up the opposite hill, appeared the head of a Confederate cavalry column which had evidently given all the ground it meant to give, and was sullenly occupying the road by fours. The opportunity to get a few cannon-shots at these people, in retaliation for "Coffee Hill," and then to charge with infantry, was too valuable to be neglected; and in a few minutes a gun from the leading battery was hauled by hand close up to the crest, and two of Carroll's small regiments were thrown forward to follow up the first discharge.

But, just as the gunners were ready, the explanation of the confident, if not impudent, halt of the Confederates was given, somewhat to our surprise. Dashing out from the woods at the double-quick appeared a body of infan-

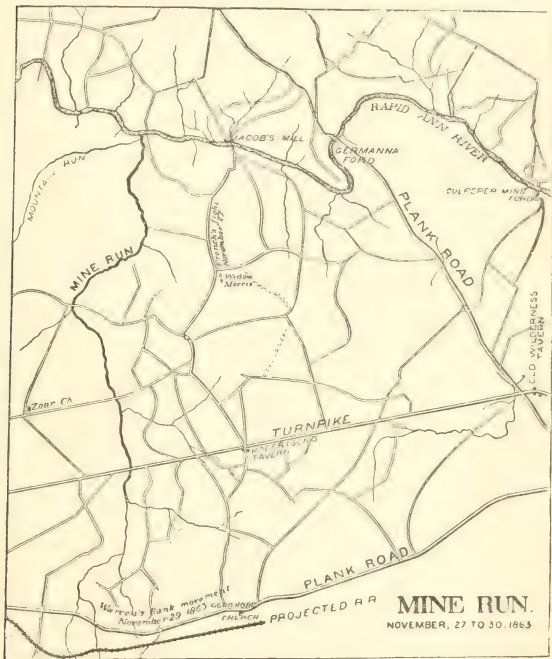
try, which, turning to their left, began to form line of battle, fronting Robertson's Tavern.

The situation had changed; Carroll's regiments were halted; Hays' brigades were brought rapidly up to form line along the crest, looking toward Mine Run; and Webb's division, next in column, was directed to form on Hays' right, where French's Third Corps, with the Sixth behind, ought already to have made its appearance. Webb moved forward at the double-quick; and it was well he did, since, as his leading brigade came up, in line, to within a few yards of the crest, upon the right, it encountered, face to face, a Confederate line of battle which was advancing to seize the same position. Webb was just enough ahead in the race to gain the crest, and the enemy, apparently not then prepared for a contest, fell back after a brief skirmish.

But where on earth was French? The Second Corps was up on the centre; but that position might become a very critical one unless the right column, which also was directed on Robertson's, and which was already overdue, should soon, very soon, come up. Warren had ten thousand men; French and Sedgwick, together, had more than twenty-five thousand. The numbers of the enemy were of course unknown; yet this was manifestly the point where Lee would concentrate the bulk of his available force. In point of fact, the troops opposing Warren were the divisions of Rodes and Early. Assistance could not yet be expected from the other column, the left, consisting of the First and Fifth Corps, which had the longer route, and which could now be heard, far away, fighting with the enemy's cavalry. Indeed, this column had not been directed on Robertson's Tavern at all, but was to proceed through Parker's Store.

Eleven o'clock passed, and it was soon high noon, and

yet no sign of French. General Meade, who had come up the pike and established his headquarters a mile or so in rear of Robertson's, was raging over the non-appearance of the right column, concerning which it was now



evident that something more than mere tardiness was the matter. The Third Corps, leaving camp as it was known to have done, could hardly have moved so slowly as to fail to reach Robertson's by twelve o'clock.

The situation was fast getting to be disagreeable. The enemy's lines were reported as becoming longer on both the right, occupied by Webb, and on the left, where Caldwell was now deployed ; and the pressure on our skirmish line was constantly growing heavier. It seemed to General Warren that this was an occasion where audacity might be of service ; and the skirmishers of Hays' division, on the centre, were ordered to make things lively. The order came to Carroll, who commanded the skirmishers ; and never was order more exactly obeyed. Dashing up and down his line, on horseback, a mark for hundreds of rifles, this intrepid fighter again and again thrust his skirmishers into the very faces of the men who formed the Confederate line of battle. No matter how often the Confederate skirmish line was reinforced, it had to go back under the daring advance of the men of the Seventh West Virginia and Fourth Ohio.

While thus the enemy's attention was occupied in front, every eye and ear was intent to catch the first sight or sound of French's advance from the right ; but for either sight or sound of French the troops at Robertson's waited in vain. Hour after hour passed, the danger of the Confederates assuming the offensive momentarily increasing, until, at last, to Warren's infinite relief, the sun went down ; and the Second Corps, in its advanced and isolated position, one-sixth of the army thrown far out in front, was, for ten hours at least, safe.

Now, where, all this time, *was* French ? That officer had left his camp, in good season, but had taken the wrong road,¹ a road which would, indeed, have brought

¹ General Humphreys is very severe upon General French, and seems to show that his mistake was inexcusable, committed against positive and repeated warnings. At any rate, it cost French his command and his rank.

him, in time, to Robertson's, but which led him, in the immediate instance, across the path of Johnson's Confederate division, of Early's corps, which, on the report of the crossing of the Rapidan, was hurrying forward to meet Meade's army and delay its movements until Hill's corps could come up from its distant cantonments, south of Orange Court House. Johnson fulfilled his mission of delay to perfection. It would seem as though the Third and Sixth Corps would not long have been blocked by a single Confederate division, but the first collision of the two bodies, near Morris', resulted disastrously to the head of French's column. That fact caused elaborate preparations for battle to be made, and these, with the not very decisive fighting which ensued, consumed the entire day. This action, in which French lost about seven hundred, and Johnson about five hundred, men, proved to be full of fate for the Army of the Potomac. It cost all the time that was needed to bring forward the divisions of A. P. Hill, and to enable the Confederate engineers to extend their intrenchments toward the south, to cover the roads by which the centre and left Union columns were advancing.

Yet, even after this third cause of delay, so disconcerting to his plans, and, indeed, destroying all possibility of surprising the enemy and of interposing between Ewell and Hill, General Meade did not relinquish his purpose of bringing on a fight. Communication was established with the errant right column; and General Sedgwick, passing by French, took the lead in a march which, before morning, brought the Sixth Corps to Robertson's. Meanwhile, the left column, consisting of the Fifth and First Corps, was brought over to form on Warren's left.

Thus the morning of the 28th found Meade's army in

line, stretching across the turnpike, with Gregg's cavalry on the Orange Plank Road.

But for the successive delays which have been recited, the Army of the Potomac could easily have occupied this position, only two or three miles from Mine Run, by daybreak of the 27th.

But, though a day had been lost in a movement essentially of the nature of a surprise, General Meade, as has been said, was still determined to bring on an action; and accordingly the several corps were pushed forward, in the morning of the 28th, against the position which had been occupied by Rodes and Early when night fell; but those positions were found abandoned. Lee, having gained all the time he needed, by detaining French at Morris', and, in consequence, holding Warren back at Robertson's Tavern on the turnpike, and Sykes on the plank road, had fallen back upon the strong line of Mine Run.

We have said that the line of Mine Run was a strong one, and so, by nature, it was; but, when Meade planned the campaign, this position had not been intrenched. The commander of the Army of the Potomac had relied on carrying his columns, by a rapid movement, across Mine Run before Hill could get up. When, however, the advance of the five Union corps, pushing forward from Robertson's Tavern, on the morning of the 28th, came in sight of the valley of Mine Run, a very ugly looking line of hills had been rendered more repulsive in aspect by fallen trees and lines of freshly dug earth. The creek, swollen with the recent heavy rains, had overflowed its banks, turning the valley at many places into a marsh. General Meade might, indeed, on the first sight of the enemy's line, have brought his corps rapidly up to attack it, and thus prevent its being further strengthened by

fortifications; but the day that had been lost had both diminished the occasion for haste, there being no longer any chance of fighting Ewell and Hill separately, and had, for the same reason, vastly increased the difficulty of carrying the position by a *coup de main* and the danger of attempting this without careful arrangements. Meade had but five men to the enemy's three, and this, against such an army as that of Northern Virginia, so tenacious, so resolute, so well led, occupying fortified positions of their own choosing, was not odds enough to justify precipitate action and partial preparation.

What, we can now see, might, in spite of the delays of the 27th, have been undertaken, with strong hopes of success, if promptly begun on the evening of that day, is as follows: Whatever the embarrassments caused by French's inopportune encounter with Johnson, on the 27th, the approach of night rendered new dispositions possible, to do the next best thing to that in General Meade's view when he crossed the Rapidan. The First and Fifth Corps should not have been called in from the plank road, but, on the contrary, should have been reinforced by Sedgwick's corps marched across behind Warren.

French's corps should have been drawn in to Robertson's, and there united with the Second Corps, to hold the turnpike and occupy the enemy on the right, advancing, of course, to Mine Run, if not strenuously opposed.

Meanwhile, the three corps on the plank road, with Gregg's cavalry, should have initiated a vigorous turning movement, early on the 28th, over the same ground as that covered by Warren's operations of the 29th. This would not have restored the lost day of the 27th, but it would have saved the 28th, and the three corps forming the left column could have got a fair fight out of Hill behind Mine Run.

But, while we can see that this course would have given the Army of the Potomac at least a chance to redeem the campaign from failure, it is not at all surprising that, with his plans so completely disconcerted as they had been, General Meade should have let the night of the 27th go by without initiating a new turning movement. Moreover, the Comte de Paris states that Meade's mind had been much impressed by the appearance of Johnson's Confederate division in the Jacobs' Mill Road. This, which was a mere stroke of audacity, had given the Union commander the belief that General Lee really intended to pass his right and cut him off from the Rapidan, an apprehension similar to that which, as we shall see, caused an early halt of the Army of the Potomac on the 4th of May, 1864.

WARREN'S FLANK MARCH.

During the 28th the army, now heavily massed on the two sides of the turnpike, confronted the enemy's position behind Mine Run. The more it was inspected the uglier it appeared, justifying General Morgan's expression, "almost impregnable strength." During the afternoon and evening, General Meade made his plans, which involved a renewal of the movement along the plank road from Hope Church, the position from which Sykes and Newton had been called away in the late afternoon of the 27th. All this ground was now to be retraced by the turning column. When we come to see that the attempted movement actually failed for want of daylight, we can appreciate the mistake which led to the original abandonment of the advanced position, by which the upper valley of Mine Run could be most easily entered and the enemy's rear reached.

The command of the turning column was intrusted to General Warren, in whom General Meade had great confidence, both from long acquaintance and also, and especially, from his conduct at Gettysburg and Bristoe. The troops taken for this purpose were to be General Warren's own corps, the Second, which had been relieved, at the centre, by the Fifth, and Terry's strong and highly disciplined division of the Sixth Corps. Only three batteries were to accompany the column. The movement, which involved a countermarch to Robertson's, was begun late in the afternoon, and resumed at an early hour on the 29th; yet so heavy were the roads that it was after noon before Hope Church had been reached and Warren's sixteen thousand men were massed behind the cavalry.

And here, while every minute was precious, occurred a most perplexing complication. An officer from General Gregg's division, the body of which was stationed on the plank road two or three miles in rear of the church, came dashing in to announce that the cavalry had been cut in two and their trains captured. The messenger declared that the attack on Gregg had been made with both cavalry and infantry. Upon this report it became a very serious question whether, if the enemy were really attempting a movement into General Meade's rear around our left, the Second Corps might not be only venturing farther into a trap by pursuing its march. This incident, with its important consequences, illustrates the value in war of that restless activity, unflinching audacity, and spontaneous enterprise by which the Confederate commanders were so strongly marked, but in which many of the most resolute and stubborn fighters in our own army seemed lacking.

At last after a delay, brief, indeed, but long with ref-

erence to the fast passing hours of a short winter day, General Warren decided to leave a brigade of infantry to support Gregg and to guard against an irruption into his own rear, and with the rest to push vigorously forward. Later and more authentic intelligence showed that the report which had proved so perplexing was false, the attack having been made by cavalry only and having been repulsed.

The time had now come for the Second Corps, which had thus far been marching in rear of our own lines or under the cover of the cavalry vedettes, to break through and announce to the enemy its purpose of attacking their flank and rear. The main body advanced up the Orange Plank Road, while a smaller column, under Colonel N. A. Miles, marched up the unfinished railroad, which here runs nearly parallel with the plank road. Our progress was disputed only by cavalry vedettes, who afforded considerable amusement by their long-range shots with carbines, each discharge being greeted with derisive cheers. General Warren fully appreciated the fact that his purpose was now known to the enemy, and every nerve was strained to push the column inside the enemy's natural line of defence before he could send down troops from his left.

At one point only was time lost. The tenacity of a few skirmishers, with the appearance of newly dug earth, led General Warren to take the time necessary to get a brigade into line, and to bring up a section of artillery to support the charge of our cavalry detachment, before which, however, the enemy rapidly fell back. And yet, press on as we would, the sun of the 29th of November was fast going down in the west, toward which we were marching. Three miles beyond Hope Church the first important resistance was encountered by Miles, from a

regiment of North Carolinians just forming. Miles' skirmish line charged swiftly and broke the regiment, which retreated into intrenchments which could be discerned in the rear.

And now we had reached the point toward which the whole movement had been directed. We were evidently on the extreme right of the enemy; his works were slight and thinly occupied. Manifestly the troops there had but recently been sent down. The appearance of Warren's column agitated them not a little, and they were to be seen moving at the double-quick to confront Miles. Under these conditions success seemed to be within our grasp, and so it would have been but for one circumstance—the day was nearly spent.

Would the light hold long enough even to carry the slight intrenchments, now apparently held by only the heads of Confederate columns? Hays' division was ordered over from the plank road to support Miles, who had formed facing the enemy's line, awaiting the order to attack. By the time Hays' troops were in order Warren reluctantly came to the conclusion that it was too late.

On the plank road, a mile away, Caldwell's division, in the lead, had also found the enemy. Colonel Byrnes, of the Twenty-eighth Massachusetts, pushed the skirmishers of the division against a regiment deployed to protect the construction of the works, and drove them rather precipitately into the intrenchments. But here, too, before the division could be brought up in line, the day was failing. Whether it would or would not have been better, in the result, to try an assault with such troops as were up, it is difficult to say. There is every reason to suppose the enemy were coming up on their side as rapidly as we on ours. At any rate, Warren, profoundly

interested as he had every reason to be in the success of this movement, decided not to attack. So night came down on the turning column while the rear divisions were arriving, and the troops went into bivouac in front of the enemy's position.

Again the hope of anticipating the enemy had been foiled; and it was not to be doubted that, as the Confederates had, on Meade's approach, extended their intrenchments southward from Bartlett's Mills to the old turnpike, so now they would, with this warning, still farther extend their works to cover the Orange Plank Road. Yet, upon the favorable reports of the early evening, both from Warren and from one of his own staff officers, Meade resolved to undertake, on the next morning, an assault in force upon the enemy's intrenchments, such as they should then be found to be, in front of the Second Corps. To this end Warren was to be strengthened by two divisions of the Third Corps, viz., those of Carr and Prince. These reinforcements would raise the attacking column, including Terry's division, to about twenty-six thousand men.

Topographically, the situation was this: Although General Warren had, in order to conceal his movements, marched a long way roundabout—first eastward from Mine Run back to Robertson's Tavern; thence southward to the plank road; thence westward to the place he had reached just before nightfall—he was really but a short distance from the army, though separated from the nearest troops by some bad woods and by two small creeks. The order of the Union corps was as follows: Sedgwick, with the Sixth Corps lacking Terry's division, was on the extreme right, his corps and Sykes' holding the ground north of the old turnpike; on the south of the pike were Newton's and French's corps. At about

the interval which would have required two corps for its occupation lay Warren's troops, facing westward, like the others, but a little more advanced, and having for their immediate purpose to break the enemy's line in front, and then make a half right wheel.

It was now proposed to detach two of French's three divisions and send them to Warren, to strengthen his coming attack, while French, with his remaining troops, should hold the interval, trusting to the difficulty of the woods and swampy ground, and to the threat of Warren's movement adown the Confederate line, to keep the enemy from assuming the aggressive. On the extreme right Sedgwick, supported by Sykes, was to follow up Warren's attack, if that were successful, by an advance against a position which General A. P. Howe, commanding division, deemed practicable.

The artillery was to open from the Union right and centre at eight o'clock, when Warren's column should assault; at nine, Sedgwick was to go in. It was a night of intense expectation. For the first time since December 13, 1862, the Army of the Potomac stood awaiting the signal to attack the army of Northern Virginia in an intrenched position. No one doubted that the morrow would see a bloody sunrise; no one doubted that the contest would be long and furious and obstinate; and, as the cold of the last day of November grew more and more intense, it was impossible to think without a shudder of the fate of the wounded of the coming fight. General Warren decided to make the following formation. Four divisions were to assault at the same moment, each in two lines of battle. These were, from left to right, Hays, Webb, Prince, Carr. On Hays' left, holding the Catharpin Road, was Terry's division; and on Carr's right, Caldwell's—both to be held back from the

advance to await contingencies. Certain it was that there was a deal of fight in those six divisions, the flower of three corps; certain it was that, if they were put in, it would be for all they were worth; and that, if beaten, it would not be at any trivial cost in life and limb. And as the night wore away, and as morning dawned, there was probably not one man in all that host who thought otherwise than that, in a few short hours, the upper valley of the Mine Run would be wrapped in flame and smoke in one of the deadliest actions of the war.

But what was the position which the light of November 30th revealed to the expectant column? From the front of the divisions of Carr and Prince, forming the right of the column, and even from their skirmish line, nothing could be seen of the enemy's position, so dense were the woods in which these divisions were formed. In front of Hays and Webb, however, the ground was open. The enemy's intrenchments were in plain view, and in a single battery fourteen guns looked angrily down the field across which these divisions were to charge. Between us and them ran a small stream which was, indeed, the beginning of Mine Run. On the left, where Carroll's brigade lay, the woods sprang up again and concealed from the skirmish line the intrenchments to be assaulted. Wherever they could be seen, however, the works were as strong as field works need be made.

The enemy had manifestly labored with zeal all night to cover themselves from the impending storm. From where Webb's and Hays' lines would come under fire, it was eight minutes, at double-quick, to the intrenchments. There was no opportunity, on our part, to mass a powerful artillery. Indeed, we could bring fewer guns to bear than could the enemy.

"As soon as it became light in the morning," says

General Morgan, in his narrative, "the men commenced to peep over the little bluff behind which they were formed, to see what kind of a task was before them. The sight appeared, generally, to give very little satisfaction; and I saw that the men had quite generally made up their minds that the affair was desperate."

General Morgan goes on to relate the purport of his conferences with the leading officers of the several commands during the interval between daylight and the time set for the assault. "None of the officers seemed to have confidence in the success of the contemplated assault, although, of course, they did not permit their fears to become known to their men." "Among these officers," he says, "might be named General Alexander Hays, than whom no officer was more buoyant and daring on the field. It is true," he further remarks, "as related by Swinton, in his 'Army of the Potomac,' that some of the soldiers pinned their names on their overcoats, as if contemplating a general slaughter. While on the picket line reconnoitring, my uniform concealed by a soldier's overcoat, I asked an old veteran of the noble First Minnesota, on picket, what he thought of the prospect. Not recognizing me as an officer he expressed himself very freely, declaring it 'a damned sight worse than Fredericksburg,' and adding, 'I am going as far as I can travel; but we can't get more than two-thirds of the way up the hill.'"

The cold had increased steadily for hours, and had now become intense and almost intolerable. It was enough to strike the heart out of any man. In such an eager and nipping air, it was pitiful to think of thousands of men lying on that slope, or scattered through the woods, perishing not so much of wounds as of frost.

At last the hour of eight approached. General War-

ren, who had spent a large part of the night upon the line of battle, and had been out, at break of day, to study the position he was to assault, suddenly announced that he would not attack unless he received renewed instructions from General Meade ; and at once rode off to consult the commander of the Army of the Potomac. This was the act which virtually closed the campaign of Mine Run, which had from its inception been attended with such evil fortune. This was the act for which General Warren was as eagerly blamed by some as he was praised by others.

“ So far as I know,” says General Morgan, “ this step was taken without consultation with anyone whatever, General Warren assuming the responsibility. It seems to me that he gave evidence of great moral courage, for he could not, in any event, be a greater loser than by the course he decided on. A young, ambitious, and rising commander, he had been given a force of thirty thousand men to accomplish a task he had the night before regarded as entirely feasible. Had he attacked with success, no matter what his loss, he would have added greatly to his fame, particularly as it was understood that the original flank movement was made partly upon his solicitation. Had he failed, he could hardly have done so without a loss of seven or eight thousand men, for the troops under him were not accustomed to easily abandon an enterprise in which they were once engaged ; and his defeat would have been charged upon the impregnable position of the works of the enemy, and credit awarded him for the gallantry and persistency of the attack.

“ Now it would be said that he persuaded General Meade to give him one-third of the army on magnificent promises ; but when the time of action had arrived his courage and self-reliance had evaporated. And, if rumor is ever to be credited, similar language was addressed to

General Meade by a corps commander who had been partially stripped of troops to reinforce General Warren. 'You have taken all my troops away from me, an old veteran in the service, and have given them to a beardless boy, and for what? Where is your young Napoleon? Why don't we hear the sound of his guns?'"

The Mine Run campaign was over. General Meade, indeed, arrived upon the field between eight and nine o'clock, and had an interview with General Warren, but pertinaciously declined to examine the position of the enemy, or to give any further directions for an attack. In this he was undoubtedly right. Since General Warren had taken it upon himself to say that the position could not be carried, and had assumed the responsibility of arresting the attack, it was proper that General Warren, and not himself, should carry that responsibility.

One word is necessary to explain a point of essential importance which will otherwise be misconceived by most persons familiar with the history of the war in the years following 1863. It will be thought that it should have been assumed, as a matter of course, that the enemy would be found, on the morning of the 30th, too strongly intrenched for an assault. In fact, however, that marvellous capacity for constructing field works in a night, and even between the arrival of the head and of the rear of a column, which subsequently caused the whole country between the Rapidan and the Appomattox to be crossed, in every direction, by lines strong enough to resist field artillery, had not yet become recognized as the dominating feature of our war. During 1862 and 1863, except when troops were assigned to positions which they were ex-

pected to hold more or less permanently, possibly against inferior force, stone walls or rail fences were considered good enough for anybody. The Second Corps was not intrenched, even on the 3d of July, when it received the charge of Pickett and Pettigrew. Here and there a little dirt, loosened by bayonets and scooped out with tin plates, was heaped up, to protect in part the soldiers' persons.

The covering of the Confederate right at Mine Run, between November 29th and November 30th, by a compact line of works, constructed, not by engineering details, but by the whole body of troops turning out and working through the night, was by far the most striking instance which had, down to that time, been given of the capability of this species of defence. Historically, that instance stands related far more closely to the operations of 1864 and 1865, than to those of 1862 and 1863. It was a prophecy of that great change in the tactics of the two armies, by which it was to become almost impossible to get a fair fight anywhere in open ground; which was to create a system of rapid, effective intrenchment, such as previously had not been dreamed of by soldiers, and had formed no part of the theory of military operations; which was to make the sanguinary struggles of 1864 and 1865 nothing but a series of assaults upon fortified lines, the troops covering themselves everywhere, spontaneously and instinctively, the moment they came into line in front of the enemy.

In explanation, in part at least, of the failure of the turning movement of the 29th of November, the Comte de Paris states, in his "History of the Civil War in America," that General Warren not only did not seek to con-

ceal his forces from the enemy, but, on the contrary, "applied himself, while placing them in sight of the enemy and lighting large fires, to make them appear still more considerable than they were in reality. He has himself stated this fact, without explaining the reason of these tactics, which are incomprehensible on the eve of an attack." To this strange conduct of General Warren the Comte de Paris attributes the fact that Hill's entire corps, twenty thousand strong, was sent over to oppose the turning column.

This statement is altogether a mistake. Not only were large fires not made on the evening and night of the 29th, for the purpose of magnifying the forces on the Orange Plank Road, the railroad, and the Catharpin Road, but no fires whatever were allowed to be lighted that night, notwithstanding the severity of the weather, the cold being so intense that several men were frozen on picket.¹ The fires to which the count alludes were those kindled after the assault proposed for the morning of the 30th had been abandoned, when Warren withdrew his men from their advanced position and suffered fires to be lighted; and these, since Prince's and Carr's divisions were to be sent back to their own corps, he caused to be made as large as possible, in order to create the impression upon the minds of the enemy that the concentration of our troops along the Orange Plank Road was still going on.

The contemplated assault of the 30th, on the left, having failed, the question presented itself to General Meade,

¹ General Carroll states that he caused his pickets to be relieved every half-hour.

whether he would continue the turning movement still farther to the left. This he quickly decided not to undertake, as it would have drawn him too far from his supplies. Had he been free to change his base to Fredericksburg, he would gladly have done so, and attempted a new movement up the Orange Plank Road into the enemy's rear.

The question then arose, Should an effort be made upon our right? This still seemed feasible, especially as the enemy were known to be in great force in front of Warren; and accordingly the divisions of Carr and Prince, which had been attached to the turning column, were sent back to French. The day of the 30th was occupied in reconnoitring the enemy's positions, and in making preparation for a grand attack on the 1st of December; but the dawn of that day disclosed such formidable fortifications covering the whole front of the Confederate army that all further efforts were abandoned, and the Army of the Potomac, remaining quietly in position throughout the day, retreated during the night of December 1st, returning to the old camps beyond the Rapidan. The Second Corps had, necessarily, the longest march, which it accomplished between 10 P.M. of the 1st and 4 P.M. of the 2d, crossing the river at Culpepper Mine Ford.

The losses suffered by the corps during the six days had been 164 in killed and wounded; but, owing to the negligence of the officer charged with withdrawing the skirmish line, a loss in prisoners was sustained, about one hundred good men having been left behind to fall into the enemy's hands. Terry's division lost a few men during the 30th, Stuart having occupied with his cavalry an eminence on the extreme right flank of the Confederate line, from which he shelled this division for a time very actively.

The officers killed or mortally wounded in the Second Corps during the expedition were Lieutenant-Colonel Theodore Hesser, Seventy-Second Pennsylvania; Captain David J. Phillips, Eighty-first Pennsylvania; Lieutenant Dwight Newbury (Adjutant), Fifteenth Massachusetts; Lieutenant George W. Rotramel, Fourteenth Indiana.

It has recently been made to appear that if the Army of the Potomac had remained a day longer in position opposite Mine Run, it would have had the fight it wanted, and that upon the Confederate initiative.

In his very clear, comprehensive, and candid "Memoirs of General J. E. B. Stuart," published in 1885, Major McClellan, Stuart's adjutant-general, writes as follows :

"I desire to state one incident in this campaign which, so far as I know, has never been recorded. Hampton occupied the extreme right of the Confederate line. A personal reconnoissance, on the 30th, brought him into a position where he was in rear of the Federal left wing, which was fully commanded by his post of observation. Hampton was looking down on the rear of the Federal guns as they stood pointed against the Confederate lines. There seemed to be no reason why a heavy force could not be concentrated at this point, which might attack the Federal lines in reverse, and perhaps re-enact some of the scenes of Chancellorsville. This information was quickly communicated to Stuart, who, after himself examining the ground, conducted General R. E. Lee to the same place. A council of war was held that night. The talk among the staff was that General Lee and General Stuart favored an immediate attack, but that Generals Ewell and Hill did not deem it best. General Lee made another personal reconnoissance on the 1st of December. He [Gen. Lee] says in his report :

“ ‘Anderson’s and Wilcox’s divisions were withdrawn from the trenches at 3 A.M. on the 2d, and moved to our right, with a view to make an attack in that quarter. As soon as it became light enough to distinguish objects it was discovered that the enemy’s pickets along our entire line had retired, and our skirmishers were sent forward to ascertain his position. The movements of General Meade, and all the reports received as to his intentions, led me to believe that he would attack, and I desired to have the advantage that such an attempt on his part would afford. After awaiting his advance until Tuesday evening, preparations were made to attack him on Wednesday morning. This was prevented by his retreat.’ ”

This is all very well. Anderson’s and Wilcox’s divisions could undoubtedly have made a formidable attack upon Warren’s left, in the position it occupied at nightfall of December 1st; but if any one supposes that Chancellorsville could have been played over again, or that there would have been any Eleventh Corps business on the Catharpin Road, with Terry’s splendid division of the Sixth Corps and the three divisions of the Second to be reckoned with, he is much mistaken. Movements into the enemy’s rear do not always succeed, as witness the 19th of May, 1864, and in surprises the surpriser sometimes wishes he hadn’t surprised, as witness the 14th of October, 1863. On the occasion referred to Warren had under his command sixteen thousand of the choicest troops of the Potomac Army, twice as many as he had at Bristoe Station; twice as many as Howard had at Dowdall’s Tavern; our pickets were well out; commanding officers and staffs were on the alert. There would have been no surprise, no stampede; nothing but a hard, bitter, long fight between two nearly equal bodies of brave men.

The changes among the regimental field officers of the corps during the months of October and November had been as follows :

DISCHARGED.—Major Samuel Roberts, Seventy-second Pennsylvania, October 27th ; Lieutenant-Colonel Robert McFarland, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, November 4th ; Colonel Alonzo Ferguson, One Hundred and Fifty-second New York, November 23d ; Colonel Robert Nugent, Sixty-ninth New York, November 28th (subsequently recommissioned Colonel, October 30th, 1864).

RESIGNED.—Major Philo D. Phillips, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York, October 29th ; Lieutenant-Colonel Edward P. Harris, First Delaware, October 28th ; Colonel Francis E. Heath, Nineteenth Maine, November 4th.

PROMOTED.—Major Samuel C. Armstrong, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York, November 10th, to be Lieutenant-Colonel of the Ninth Regiment United States Colored Troops.

DISMISSED.—One officer was dismissed the service in this period, Major John Garrett, Sixty-ninth New York.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WINTER CAMPS OF 1863-64—MORTON'S FORD.

AFTER the return from the pitiful Mine Run expedition the troops felt that they would at last be permitted to go into winter quarters; and accordingly, after a removal from Stevensburg to Cole's Hill, on the 7th, set about building their huts or walling around their tents in good earnest.

On the 16th of December General Warren left camp on a leave of absence of fifteen days.

On the 29th General Hancock returned and took command of the corps, from which he had parted while even yet the remnants of Longstreet's column were fleeing across the plain which separated them from Seminary Ridge. General Hancock remained with the corps until January 8th, when he again relinquished the command to General Warren.

The monthly returns of the corps, August to December inclusive, had shown the aggregate strength as follows:

| | August 31st. | September 30th. | October 31st. | November 30th. | December 31st. |
|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Staff | 11 | 9 | 15 | 15 | 16 |
| Artillery Brigade | 763 | 759 | 800 | 783 | 822 |
| First Division | 6,083 | 7,025 | 7,716 | 7,754 | 7,582 |
| Second Division | 6,560 | 6,712 | 7,310 | 7,152 | 6,996 |
| Third Division | 6,830 | 6,955 | 6,799 | 6,737 | 6,924 |
| | 20,247 | 21,460 | 22,640 | 22,441 | 22,340 |

These several aggregates had been distributed as follows :

| | August 31st. | September 30th. | October 31st. | November 30th. | December 31st. |
|------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Present for duty | 7,598 | 10,472 | 11,402 | 11,233 | 11,092 |
| On extra or daily duty | 456 | 523 | 511 | 465 | 631 |
| Sick | 412 | 426 | 570 | 378 | 585 |
| In arrest, etc. | 88 | 74 | 73 | 83 | 74 |
| Absent | 11,693 | 9,965 | 10,084 | 10,282 | 9,958 |

This table shows the following percentages :

| | August 31st. | September 30th. | October 30th. | November 30th. | December 31st. |
|------------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Present for duty | 37.53 | 48.8 | 50.36 | 50.05 | 49.65 |
| On extra or daily duty | 2.25 | 2.44 | 2.26 | 2.07 | 2.82 |
| Sick or in arrest | 2.47 | 2.33 | 2.84 | 2.06 | 2.95 |
| Absent | 57.75 | 46.43 | 44.54 | 45.82 | 44.58 |

The close of the year 1863 found the corps still in camp on Cole's Hill, near Stevensburg, headquarters at the Thom House. After the return from Mine Run the policy was adopted of giving furloughs to such of the troops as should, on the expiration of the three years of enlistment, re-enlist for another three years; and under this order many of the old regiments were sent home, both to enjoy their brief vacation, and, if possible, to recruit their numbers for the strife of the coming year. Leave of absence was also given, in moderation, to the officers of the command.

During January corps headquarters were advised that Brigadier-General Francis C. Barlow, formerly the intrepid and adventurous Colonel of the Sixty-seventh New York, and afterward division commander in the Eleventh Corps, with which he had been desperately wounded at Gettysburg, was assigned to duty with the

Second Corps. General Barlow, however, for a time remained upon recruiting service.

MORTON'S FORD, FEBRUARY 6, 1864.

Early in February occurred the first break in the long winter rest of the troops. It had been arranged at Washington that General Butler, commanding the army of the James, should move rapidly upon Richmond from the south, and seek to capture that city by surprise, while the Army of the Potomac should so far co-operate as to move down to the Rapidan and, by a show of intention to assume the aggressive, detain Lee's army on the line of that river.

In pursuance of this plan, the Second Corps broke camp early in the morning of the 6th of February, and moved to Morton's Ford, under the command of General Caldwell, General Warren being, at the time of starting, disabled from service, although he came up in the afternoon. Upon arriving at Morton's Ford, the enemy's skirmishers were found at the crossing, which was commanded by the high ground on our own side. Further back the enemy's works were seen upon hills which ran around in a semicircle resting at either end upon the river. A body of skirmishers from the Third Division, conducted by Captain Robert S. Seabury, the gallant and accomplished assistant adjutant-general of General Owen, was thrown forward, and, advancing with caution until the situation could be clearly discerned, dashed with great resolution through the ford, capturing the enemy's picket entire.

The artillery on either side opened promptly, while Hays' division was thrown down to the river and crossed with comparatively little loss. A strong skirmish line

was now thrown out under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel W. H. Baird, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York, and the enemy's skirmishers, though reinforced and resisting stiffly, were driven step by step backward into their works. The field was an amphitheatre, and from the high ground on the other side, where a brilliant staff, consisting of Generals Meade, Humphreys, Warren, and two score of officers were assembled, a perfect view of the affair could be obtained. Colonel Baird's gallantry was all the more to be remarked, because he was one of those officers who had been dismissed for misconduct at Harper's Ferry in 1862, and had, but a few weeks before,¹ been restored to his regiment. Certainly no man resolved to wipe out the stains of the past ever had a fairer opportunity, or improved it better.

No thought was entertained of actively assaulting the works, but the semblance of it was kept up with vigor, General Hays taking part in the frequent demonstrations with that reckless exposure of himself which always characterized him in battle. After dark the Third Division was relieved, on the farther bank, by Webb's Second Division, and preparations were made to hold the ground and keep up the show of force through the next day, if required. During the night, however, General Meade decided that the demonstration had been protracted sufficiently, and Webb was withdrawn, a strong skirmish line, supported by artillery fire, being left on the other side. During the 7th the corps remained in position on the north bank, until six o'clock, when it returned to camp.

It is needless to say that General Butler's movement

¹ Recommissioned November 5, 1863.

on Richmond, from the South, amounted to nothing. The only report which the writer ever saw of his operations acknowledged the loss of six forage-caps by the men of his command. The losses of the Second Corps, in the demonstration intended to open the way for him, were two hundred and sixty-one¹ killed, wounded, and missing. Among the officers wounded were Lieutenant-Colonel Sawyer, Eighth Ohio; Lieutenant-Colonel Lockwood, Seventh West Virginia; Lieutenant-Colonel Pierce, One Hundred and Eighth New York; Major Coit, Fourteenth Connecticut. From the last-named regiment six officers were wounded.

On the 27th of February was received a reinforcement in the One Hundred and Eighty-third Pennsylvania Volunteers, commanded by Colonel James C. Lynch, formerly a captain in the One Hundred and Sixth Regiment from that State, and long a highly useful staff-officer in the Second Division. The One Hundred and Eighty-third was assigned to the Fourth Brigade, First Division. The same month the First Minnesota was sent home to recruit, after its terrific losses.

During December, 1863, and January and February, 1864, the following changes had occurred among the field officers of the corps:

DISCHARGED.—Major Hugo Hildebrandt, Thirty-ninth New York, December 10th; Major James Duffy, Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania, December 14th; Colonel William Colville, First Minnesota, Brevet Brigadier-General, January 11th; Colonel Daniel G. Bingham, Sixty-fourth New York, February 10th; Major John T. Hill,

¹ Ten enlisted men killed; sixteen officers and one hundred and ninety-three enlisted men wounded; one officer and forty-one enlisted men missing.

Twelfth New Jersey, February 24th. The four officers first named had been severely wounded at Gettysburg.

RESIGNED.—Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Freudenberg, Fifty-second New York, December 12th. Colonel Freudenberg had been severely wounded at Gettysburg.

REORGANIZATION.

A most important period in the history of the Second Corps had arrived. During the two years that had elapsed since its organization by President Lincoln, in March, 1862, the corps, notwithstanding the trying demands made upon it; notwithstanding the rapidity with which one wearing campaign succeeded another—each battle finding the wounds of the last still unhealed; notwithstanding the enormous sum total of its losses in men, and even more in officers, had remained essentially a unit, having a strongly marked character of its own, with an unbroken continuity of life as between one of its periods and another, and an almost perfect harmony as between its constituent parts. Its first commander, indeed, the heroic Sumner, had at last suffered the sword to fall from his nerveless grasp; Richardson had fallen mortally wounded, at the head of the First Division, and the original commanders of the two remaining divisions, Sedgwick and French, had been called away to command other corps, as also had Howard, one of the original brigade commanders; Zook, Cross, Mallon, and Willard had been killed at the head of brigades; Max Weber, Dana, and Kimball had been wounded, never to return; twelve thousand six hundred men had been killed, wounded, or captured, in action during 1862; and even out of those depleted ranks, seven thousand two hundred had been lost in the battles of 1863. Yet through all this the

corps had retained its unity and its characteristic quality. New regiments had, from time to time, been sent to recruit its ranks ; four entire brigades had joined it : Kimball's at Harrison's Landing, Max Weber's and Morris' on the way to Antietam, Hays' on the road to Gettysburg ; yet there was still enough remaining of the old body and the old spirit to take up, assimilate, and vitalize the new material.

Moreover, between the rapid, exhausting marches, and the desperate battles, had been intervals of rest and discipline, in winter and in summer camps, when the shattered regiments regained form and tone ; when the new men learned the ways of the old, and caught the spirit of the organization they had entered. The time had now come for a fierce and o'er-mastering change in the constituents, and, by necessary consequence in some degree, in the character of the Second Corps. Men, more than there were remaining in the original regiments, were, on a single day, to be poured into the corps, and the new body, thus composed, was to be thrown into one of the most furious campaigns of human history, the strength of a regiment, the strength of a brigade, to be shot down in a day, with as many more the next ; a month to be one continuous battle, only interrupted by long and fatiguing marches ; two, or three, or four officers commanding the same regiment or brigade in a single week. This, with no long, benign intervals for rest, for healing, for discipline, for mutual acquaintance, was to be the experience of the Second Corps, in the months immediately following the period that has been reached in our story.

On the 26th of February, both houses of Congress passed a bill to create the grade of lieutenant-general of the armies of the United States. On the 1st of March,

the President by his approval made the bill law ; and, on the same day, nominated to that high office Major-General Grant, the appointment being, on the 2d of March, confirmed by the Senate. On the day following, the new lieutenant-general was summoned by telegraph from the West. On the 8th of the month, he arrived in Washington ; on the 9th was presented to the President and received his commission ; and on the 10th passed over the Orange & Alexandria Railroad to Brandy Station, where he had a conference with General Meade. General Grant's views requiring a visit to the West, he spent the interval between the 11th and the 23d of March in making that journey, and in arranging plans with General Sherman. The days between the 23d and the 26th General Grant spent in Washington ; and on the latter day, he established his headquarters at Culpepper, that he might, in the coming great struggle, personally direct the movements of the Army of the Potomac.

Meanwhile, certain very important changes were effected in the organization of that army. The five corps which had fought together, in victory or defeat, from the Chickahominy to Mine Run, were consolidated into three, involving the discontinuance of two honored, historic names. Whether this consolidation was, in the result, advantageous ; whether, for practical or for equitable reasons, the corps to be retained were wisely or rightly selected, we need not here inquire. Suffice it to say that the two corps organizations to be sacrificed, for what was sincerely believed to be the public good, were the First and the Third. The First was to be transferred entire to the Fifth, which was thereafter to be commanded by Major-General G. K. Warren. The Third Corps was to be parted ; its Third Division, under Brigadier-General Ricketts, was to form a part of the Sixth Corps, to be

commanded, as heretofore, by Major-General John Sedgwick; its First and Second Divisions, divisions rendered illustrious by Kearny and Hooker, were to be transferred to the Second Corps, at the head of which Hancock, returning from his Gettysburg wounds, had again drawn his sword.

Of the grief and anger of the officers and men of the Third Corps at the dismemberment of that noble body of troops, with which they had been so long connected, of which they had justly been so proud, and which had become to them a sacred thing, it is not meet to speak here. That wound has never yet wholly healed in the heart of many a brave and patriotic soldier. Certain it is that, since the break must come, these old divisions of Kearny and Hooker could not have been sent to any body of troops where their gallantry and discipline would have been more cordially recognized, or where they would have found heartier comradeship. Hereafter, the names of Birney and Mott, Egan and McAllister, Pierce and Madill, Brewster and De Trobriand, were to be borne on the rolls of the Second Corps, in equal honor with Barlow and Gibbon, Hays and Miles, Carroll and Brooke, Webb and Smyth; the deeds of these new-comers were to be an undistinguishable part of the common glory; their sufferings and losses were to be felt in every nerve of the common frame; the blood of the men of Hooker and Kearny, the men of Richardson and Sedgwick, was to drench the same fields from the Rapidan to the Appomattox.

By General Orders No. 77, of the series of 1864, headquarters of Second Army Corps, the reorganization of the corps, to meet the requirements of the new situation, was effected. The former three divisions of the original corps were consolidated into two, while the new divisions

arriving from the former Third Corps were retained entire, as the Third and Fourth Divisions of the Second.

The following was the composition of the command on the 31st of March, 1864.

THE CORPS, Major-General WINFIELD S. HANCOCK, commanding.

THE ARTILLERY BRIGADE, Colonel J. C. Tidball, commanding: Battery K, Fourth United States; Battery C, Fifth United States; Tenth Massachusetts Independent; Batteries A and B, First Rhode Island; Battery B, First New Jersey; Battery G, First New York; Twelfth New York Independent; Battery F, First Pennsylvania; First Battalion of the Fourth Regiment New York Heavy Artillery.

FIRST DIVISION, Brigadier-General FRANCIS C. BARLOW, commanding.

First Brigade, Colonel N. A. Miles, commanding: Sixty-first New York; Eighty-first, One Hundred and Fortieth, and One Hundred and Eighty-third Pennsylvania; Twenty-sixth Michigan.

Second Brigade, Colonel Thomas A. Smyth, commanding: Twenty-eighth Massachusetts; Sixty-third, Sixty-ninth, and Eighty-eighth New York; One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania.

Third Brigade, Colonel Paul Frank, commanding: Thirty-ninth, Fifty-second, Fifty-seventh, One Hundred and Eleventh, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth, and One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York; detachment of the Seventh New York.

Fourth Brigade, Colonel John R. Brooke, commanding: Second Delaware; Fifty-third, One Hundred and

Forty-fifth, and One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania; Sixty-fourth and Sixty-sixth New York.

SECOND DIVISION, Brigadier-General JOHN GIBBON, commanding.

First Brigade, Brigadier-General Alexander S. Webb, commanding: Nineteenth Maine; Fifteenth, Nineteenth, and Twentieth Massachusetts; Forty-second, Fifty-ninth, and Eighty-second New York; Seventh Michigan.

Second Brigade, Brigadier-General J. T. Owen, commanding: Sixty-ninth, Seventy-first, Seventy-second, and One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania; One Hundred and Fifty-second New York.

Third Brigade, Colonel S. S. Carroll, commanding: Fourth and Eighth Ohio; Fourteenth Indiana; Seventh West Virginia; One Hundred and Eighth New York; Tenth (Battalion) New York; First Delaware; Fourteenth Connecticut; Twelfth New Jersey.

THIRD DIVISION, Major General DAVID B. BIRNEY, commanding.

First Brigade, Brigadier-General J. H. Hobart Ward, commanding: Third Maine; Fortieth, Eighty-sixth, and One Hundred and Twenty-fourth New York; Ninety-ninth, One Hundred and Tenth, and One Hundred and Forty-first Pennsylvania; Twentieth Indiana; Second United States Sharpshooters.

Second Brigade, Brigadier-General Alexander Hays, commanding: Fourth and Seventeenth Maine; Third and Fifth Michigan; Fifty-seventh, Sixty-third, Sixty-eighth, and One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania; First United States Sharpshooters.

FOURTH DIVISION, Brigadier-General JOSEPH B. CARR, commanding.

First Brigade, Brigadier-General Gershom Mott, commanding: Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, and Eleventh

New Jersey; Twenty-sixth and One Hundred and Fifteenth Pennsylvania; First and Sixteenth Massachusetts.

Second Brigade, Colonel W. R. Brewster, commanding: Seventieth, Seventy-first, Seventy-second, Seventy-third, Seventy-fourth, and One Hundred and Twentieth New York; Eleventh Massachusetts; Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania.

Although General Carr was announced as commander of the Fourth Division, he did not serve in that capacity, but was relieved by orders from the Headquarters of the armies of the United States, and assigned to another field of duty. General Mott succeeded to the command of the Fourth Division.

The aggregate force in the enlarged command was 43,035, distributed as follows:¹

| | |
|-----------------------|--------|
| Corps Staff | 18 |
| Artillery | 663 |
| First Division | 12,250 |
| Second Division | 11,367 |
| Third Division | 10,174 |
| Fourth Division | 8,563 |

The same aggregate was further distributed as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------|
| Present for duty | 23,877 |
| On extra or daily duty | 4,422 |
| Sick | 1,278 |
| In arrest or confinement | 152 |
| Absent | 13,306 |

43,035

¹ The Sixty-eighth Pennsylvania was detached in April. The One Hundred and Fourteenth Pennsylvania, which had belonged to Graham's Brigade of the Third Corps, was permanently detached at headquarters Army of the Potomac. The Twenty-sixth Wisconsin, One Hundred and Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania, and Sixth Minnesota, were assigned to the Second Corps by Special Order 123, War Department, March 21, 1864. The Thirty-sixth Wisconsin was subsequently substituted for the Twenty-sixth. The Sixth Minnesota never joined. The One Hundred and Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania joined during the campaign.

One notable change in the personnel of the corps takes place at this time, Brigadier-General John C. Caldwell retiring permanently therefrom, upon the reorganization incident to the assignment of the troops from the Third Corps. General Caldwell had served continuously in the corps since his promotion to the grade of general officer. He had seen much hard and dangerous service ; had been more than once wounded at the head of a brigade or division. He was a loyal and patriotic soldier, of more than usual intellectual ability and scholarly accomplishments.

A striking feature of the foregoing roster is the number of brigades commanded by officers below the grade of general, being not less than six out of the eleven infantry brigades. When it is considered that this was at the opening of a campaign and that it was after a most extensive consolidation, which had swollen some of the brigades to seven, eight, and even nine regiments, the inadequacy of the number of general officers allowed the army will be seen. The result was due, first, to the parsimony with which the army was treated by Congress, and secondly, to the political trifling of the Executive, which could find a brigadier's commission for the Hon. Dick Busteed, who wouldn't have known a cohort from an apothecary's mortar, but which could not find a brigadier's commission for men who had, in many a desperate battle, shown the highest qualities of generalship. It is idle to say that a man can administer, march, and fight a brigade equally well, if "colonel commanding," as he could if a brigadier-general. Rank and position necessarily count for a great deal ; and while Colonel Miles, or Colonel Carroll, or Colonel Brooke could unquestionably command troops in action quite as well as Brigadier-General Busteed, not one of them could do nearly as well by the service as if he had the rank cor-

responding to his duties. The Confederates knew better. They had always brigadier-generals to command their brigades, and usually major-generals to command their divisions. General Humphreys's roster of the Confederate army, on the eve of the campaign of 1864, shows but three brigades of Lee's entire army without general officers. Even the vacancies caused by the casualties of the campaign were filled as fast as possible. Thus General Humphreys's roster of Lee's army in August represents only two brigades in thirty-eight as without assigned general officers. At that time, of the nine infantry brigades to which the Second Corps had been reduced, four were reported as commanded by brigadier-generals (of whom one was absent, wounded), three by colonels, and two by lieutenant-colonels.

Although the two veteran divisions of the Third Corps had been assigned to the Second, no change of camps was deemed advisable, in view of the speedy advance contemplated; and thus the troops, although under the same command, found little more opportunity to form acquaintanceships than when they had borne different corps names.

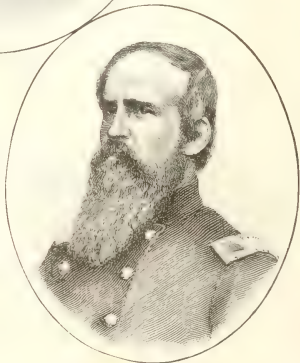
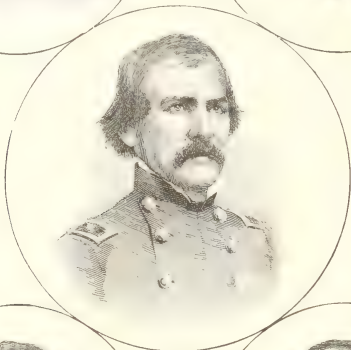
On the 22d of April, the reinforced corps was for the first time brought together, on the occasion of a review by General Grant. Of this General Morgan says: "The day, the first bright, sunny one after many days of storm; the ground, so admirably adapted that from the position of the reviewing officer the eye could take in the whole corps without effort; and the brilliant assemblage of spectators, combined to make this the finest corps review I have ever seen in the army."

The troops were arranged in four lines directly in front of the "stand" of the reviewing officer, the divisions being placed in their numerical order: the First, Barlow; the Second, Gibbon; the Third, Birney; the Fourth, Mott.

The artillery was formed on the right flank of, and perpendicular to, the infantry, so that the two arms of the service formed two sides of a square. Among the spectators were Generals Meade, Humphreys, Williams, Hunt, and others from army headquarters; and Generals Sedgwick and Warren, commanding respectively the Sixth and Fifth Corps. More than twenty-five thousand men actually marched in review. The appearance and bearing of the troops was brilliant in the extreme; but among all the gallant regiments which passed the reviewing officer, two excited especial admiration—the One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, Colonel Beaver, from the old Second, and the Fortieth New York, Colonel Egan, from the former Third Corps.

Besides the departmental staff officers, the corps headquarters staff embraced Major William G. Mitchell and Captains J. B. Parker and William D. W. Miller, aides-de-camp; Captain Edward B. Brownson, Commissary of Musters; Captain H. H. Bingham, Judge Advocate; Captain Charles McEntee, Assistant Quartermaster [assistant to Colonel Batchelder]; Captain John G. Pelton, Fourteenth Connecticut, Chief of Ambulances; Major S. O. Bull, Fifty-third Pennsylvania, Provost Marshal; Major A. W. Angell, Fifth New Jersey, topographical officer; Major W. H. Houghton, Fourteenth Indiana, Acting Assistant Inspector-General; Captain W. P. Wilson, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, and Captain W. R. Driver, Nineteenth Massachusetts, Acting Assistant Adjutant-Generals; Captain Thickston and Lieutenant Neil, Signal Officers.

By the close of April the command had been swollen, by recruiting, to an aggregate of 46,363. The number present for duty was 28,854, or 62.23 per cent. of the aggregate.



BREVET MAJ.-GEN. F. H. R. DE TROBRIAND

BREVET BRIG.-GEN. WM. G. MITCHELL

BREVET MAJ.-GEN. WM. HAYS

BREVET MAJ.-GEN. ALEX. S. WEBB

COL. EDW. E. CROSS

CHAPTER XIII.

THE WILDERNESS.

ON the night of the 3d of May, the Army of the Potomac broke camp and marched to the Rapidan. General Badeau, in his "Life of Grant," has stated that general's plan of campaign in terms which must doubtless be accepted as official and conclusive. General Badeau declares that it was not the purpose of the commander-in-chief to move on Gordonsville, or to reach any position by evading Lee's army or stealing a march upon it; that his sole objective was that army itself; that he went for a fight and for nothing else; and that his only preference as between positions, was, first, for that position which would most surely constrain the Confederates to give battle; secondly, for that position which should afford his own army the highest degree of advantage which might be compatible with giving the Confederates no chance to escape or delay a battle. These being his objects, General Grant decided not to attack Lee's army in front, either along the Rapidan or along Mine Run. It remained, therefore, by a rapid march to gain a position on Lee's right, threatening his communications with Richmond, which should compel him to come out and give battle. But as General Grant had to consider the possibility of offensive action, on Lee's part, it would be necessary, for a time, that he should hold a line extending from the point so taken northward

to the vicinity of the Rapidan. So soon as he should be prepared to take up Fredericksburg as a base of supplies, and so soon as he should have swung the vast body of his trains around into his rear upon the new line, he would then be able to shorten his own front.

In pursuance of this plan, Sedgwick's consolidated Sixth Corps was to cross the Rapidan and hold the ground immediately on the south, to prevent an offensive movement by Lee to cut the Army of the Potomac off from the river; Warren, with the consolidated Fifth Corps, was to move further south and get upon the Orange turnpike; Hancock was to go to Chancellorsville and then move forward, coming up on Warren's left and forming the column which should threaten Lee's communications. Meanwhile Burnside, with the Ninth Corps, about twenty thousand strong, not then deemed a part of the Army of the Potomac, should advance down the railroad from Centreville to the Rapidan as soon as Meade's crossing became an accomplished fact.

The first march toward carrying out this plan was begun on the night of the 3d of May. The Second Corps, which had by far the longest distance to traverse, started at eleven o'clock, and crossing Ely's ford between six and eleven o'clock on the morning of the 4th, reached Chancellorsville with the head of the column about ten o'clock.

The corps headquarters were placed in the edge of that peach orchard from which Lepine's battery had been drawn off by hand, after the terrible struggle of Sunday morning, just a year before. The ground was still strewn with the wreckage of battle. The march, though a very long one, had been accomplished in good form, except for the inevitable throwing away of blankets and overcoats on the first march following a winter in camp. Warren, meanwhile, had crossed at Germanna Ford and came

into position, at or before noon, at Wilderness Tavern, at the intersection of the Germanna Ford road with the old turnpike. Sedgwick had also crossed at Germanna and occupied the heights above the ford. Before 1 P.M., Grant had learned from the enemy's signals that Lee had taken the alarm and was concentrating on the line of Mine Run. Ewell's Corps was already on that line. Hill was now being drawn down from the upper Rapidan, while Longstreet had taken up his long march from Gordonsville.

The writer of this narrative has never been able to regard this early halt on the 4th of May otherwise than as the first misfortune of the campaign. The troops had made a stiff, but, except in the case of the Second Corps, not an exhausting march, and were in the best of condition and spirits. There was nothing, at any hour during that day, to prevent the Army of the Potomac being established on any north or south line it might have chosen to take up between "the Wilderness" and Mine Run. Only Ewell, with twenty thousand men, would have been near enough to attack at dark of the 4th. Fifty thousand men might have been established before night, eighty thousand by morning, upon such a line, say at Robertson's Tavern, with roads cut by the engineers with the aid of infantry details along the rear. The country thereabouts was well known to our officers, through the Mine Run campaign, and though not altogether paradisiacal in character, it was vastly better than the Wilderness, in which our troops had been smothered the previous May, and were to be smothered again this May.

But if it were not thought desirable to attempt to push the invading columns so near to Mine Run, an intermediate line could, without question, have been assumed. General Humphreys, then chief of staff, admits this in

his history of the campaigns of 1864 and 1865. He says, "The troops might have easily continued their march five miles further, the Second Corps to Todd's Tavern, the head of the Fifth Corps to Parker's Store, the head of the Sixth Corps to Wilderness Tavern. But," he adds, "even that would have left the right too open during the forenoon of the 5th; and it was more judicious to let the troops remain for the night where they had halted, as it made the passage of the trains secure and the troops would be fresher when meeting the enemy next day, of which there was much possibility."

Here we have reappearing the apprehension that Lee might pass between the Union right and the river, which had caused Meade to withdraw the First and Fifth Corps from the Orange Plank Road, on the evening of the 27th of November previous. But surely Torbert's cavalry, supported, if need were, by two out of the eleven infantry divisions, would have sufficed to protect the trains until the morning of the 5th, when all danger in that quarter would cease, Burnside's head of column then arriving at the Rapidan; and it seems certain that even nine divisions out of the Wilderness would have been better than eleven in the Wilderness.

But it was not so ordered; and the three corps of the Army of the Potomac encamped as narrated, with Burnside's Ninth Corps coming up by a long night march from Warrenton.

During the afternoon and night of the 4th, the reports of General Lee's movements were such as to cause some change of plans; and the orders for the 5th of May required the Sixth Corps to move up to Old Wilderness Tavern, leaving a division to cover the bridge at Germanna Ford until Burnside, the head of whose column was to arrive shortly after eight o'clock in the morning,

should come up in sufficient force. Warren was to move to Parker's Store, his right joining Sedgwick's left ; while Hancock was to move to Shady Grove Church, on the Catharpin Road, extending his right toward Warren at Parker's. Wilson's cavalry division was to hold off the enemy on the several roads by which they might approach Hancock's left or move into his rear. Hancock's line of march would lead him through Todd's Tavern, and keep him, while on the route, at a considerable interval from the other two corps, which, in fact, by this programme, constituted one column confronting the enemy, while the Second Corps constituted a turning column.

It is difficult to understand why Hancock should have been sent so far away to the left, unless his movement was to be persisted in, except only in some extraordinary emergency ; unless, that is, the commanding general felt strong enough to fight, or at least to hold in check, the enemy with the Fifth and Sixth Corps, while pushing the Second into their rear. Yet when General Lee attacked the two corps on the right, Hancock, before the battle had been fought out, was ordered to halt at Todd's Tavern, which his advance had already passed two miles, and, a little later, was directed to countermarch, and to proceed up the Brock Road to the Plank Road.

It has been said that Hancock, in pursuance of orders, moved past Todd's Tavern in the morning of the 5th of May. The head of column was an hour's march beyond that point when a staff officer arrived with intelligence that Warren had become engaged with the enemy toward the north, and with orders for Hancock to halt. This was at about nine o'clock. What would have been the result had Hancock, instead of being halted and subsequently recalled, been ordered to push with all his

force into the enemy's rear, is fairly a matter of question. Only five out of nine of Lee's divisions were up: might not the Fifth and Sixth Corps have been trusted to hold these in check? The day was only fairly opened; the commander of the turning column was a resolute and energetic soldier; he had under him twenty-eight thousand men. A rapid movement into the rear of the forces opposing Warren would have raised a very interesting issue. Hancock should have been able to fight all day against anything that could have been brought against him, in such an enterprise, provided only the Fifth and Sixth Corps did their duty, as they were sure to do, at the old Wilderness Tavern. Certainly, had but eight of the fourteen thousand men who were the next week to be sent down from the defences of Washington been that day behind Hancock, there could have been no question of the entire safety of such a movement.

But whatever else might have been done in the situation developed by Lee's initiative, Hancock was, in fact, halted at nine o'clock; and, about two hours later, received orders to move by the Brock Road to its junction with the Orange Plank Road, Lee being reported as moving troops out the Plank road from Parker's Store, as if to interpose between the two Union columns. Hancock accordingly countermarched to Todd's Tavern and then took the route northward to Getty's support. Birney's division, which, having formed the rear in the advance of the early morning, took the lead in the retrograde movement, arrived at the intersection of the Brock and Plank Roads about two o'clock, and began at once to form in two lines of battle along the Brock Road, mainly south of the Plank Road, connecting with Getty's left.

At this moment the bullets of the enemy's skirmishers were crossing the Brock Road by which the troops were

coming up. Mott's division was the next to arrive ; and it took position in a similar formation on Birney's left. Gibbon was also ordered up, to form in two lines, on the left of Mott. Frank's brigade of Barlow's division was left behind to hold the junction of the Brock and a road leading to the Catharpin Road. The rest of Barlow's division was ordered to occupy some high, cleared ground which ran backward from the left of our general line, the only open ground to be found in that "Wilderness," rightly so called ; and here all the artillery of the corps, since it could be used nowhere else, was established, with the exception of Dow's Sixth Maine, which was put in the second line on Mott's left, and of a section of Ricketts' Pennsylvania battery, which came into action on the Plank Road itself, under the orders of General Getty.

The situation, as Hancock learned it on his arrival, was as follows. Getty, with his division of the Sixth Corps, had been sent south from the turnpike to the Plank Road, on a report that the enemy were pushing up this road, from Parker's Store. Arriving about eleven o'clock, he had encountered the advance of Hill's corps, Heth's division leading, with Wilcox behind.¹ No serious engagement had taken place, for General Lee was well disposed to put off the impending battle until Longstreet's corps could come up from Orange Court House. Meanwhile a heavy battle had been fought, away to the north, between the Fifth Corps supported by a portion of the Sixth, and the Confederate corps of Ewell, in which our troops, owing to the dense woods, tangled with underbrush, in which men strange to the country could scarcely avoid losing direction, had been rather roughly handled, Griffin losing two guns.

¹ Anderson's division of this corps was far back.

General Hancock found General Getty anxious to make an early attack, in consequence of repeated instructions from General Meade, who addressed similar urgent representations to Hancock himself upon his arrival on the ground ; but the latter was strongly desirous of getting his whole corps up and in hand before beginning the fight. It is no small matter to bring up twenty-five to thirty thousand men by a single road and form them for battle ; and the difficulty was, in the present case, increased by the narrowness of the Brock Road, and the density of the woods on either side. The greatest efforts of the staff were put forth to hasten the work ; to get the artillery out of the way and to push the infantry forward. At 4.15 P.M., however, General Getty, feeling himself constrained by General Meade's orders, moved forward to undertake to drive the enemy down the Plank Road toward Parker's Store. Scarcely had his troops moved three hundred yards through the thickets when Hill was encountered ; and so fierce became the fighting that, although the Second Corps formation still lacked much of completeness, Hancock had no resource but to throw Birney forward, with his own and Mott's division. Birney advanced on both Getty's right and left, the section of Ricketts' battery on the Plank Road moving forward with the troops.

As the line of fire grew longer and longer, the importance of a more complete preparation for the attack became painfully evident. It was scarcely possible to bring up the remaining troops with sufficient rapidity to meet the demands from the leading divisions for reinforcements. One of the fiercest battles of history had begun ; and both armies were entering into the first action of the opening campaign with ferocious resolution. Owen's brigade, from Gibbon, was thrown in on either side of

the Plank Road, to support Getty. Then Smyth's and Brooke's brigades, from Barlow, went in on our extreme left, with all the force which the nature of the country would allow them to exert, and drove back Hill's right a considerable distance. Carroll's brigade, from Gibbon, was pushed up the Plank Road in support of the troops, on either side, which had received a savage countercharge and had for the moment been forced back, leaving behind them Ricketts' two guns. But before the Confederates could secure the coveted trophies, detachments from the Fourteenth Indiana and the Eighth Ohio succeeded in retaking the guns, and hauled them down the road. And so, amid those dense woods, where foemen could not see each other—where colonels could not see the whole of their regiments, where, often, captains could not see the left of their companies—these two armies, thus suddenly brought into collision, wrestled in desperate battle until night came to make the gloom complete. Thousands on either side had fallen. Of those that survived many had not beheld an enemy; yet the tangled forest had been alive with flying missiles; the whistling of the bullets through the air had been incessant; the very trees seemed peopled by spirits that shrieked and groaned through those hours of mortal combat.

The fighting ceased at dark. Neither side had secured any decided advantage. Hill had been driven some distance backward; and his two divisions had been considerably broken and disordered. General Humphreys, a very cautious commentator, does not hesitate to express the opinion that, had there been but an hour more of daylight, Hill would have been wholly driven from the field, for he was both outnumbered and outfought; but Hancock's late arrival, owing to his long detour, prevented a complete success. Grant certainly had not expected to

be attacked at that time and place, or he would not have sent Hancock toward Shady Grove Church. Calling the Second Corps back from its turning movement he had sought, with one tremendous effort, to lift and throw his antagonist. But he had underrated the valor and endurance of the Army of Northern Virginia, not to be daunted and not to be surprised, commanded by resolute, audacious, untiring leaders, defending a country with which it had become perfectly familiar by long occupation, and which was, more or less, of a kind with that in which all its soldiers had been reared. Upon the Union right the Fifth and Sixth Corps had met with varying fortune in their contest with Ewell, but with no serious reverses, although obliged to relinquish much of the ground they had at first gained.

The losses had been very heavy. Among the killed of that afternoon was General Alexander Hays.¹ At Gettysburg, at Bristoe, at Mine Run, at Morton's Ford, this devoted officer rode, with his staff and flag behind him, the mark of a thousand riflemen, the admiration of two armies, only to fall in a tangled wilderness where scarcely a regiment could note his person and derive inspiration from his courage and martial enthusiasm. The contrast has a significance extending far beyond the single loss of this brave commander. All the peculiar advantages of the Army of the Potomac were sacrificed in the jungle-fighting into which they were thus called to engage. Of what use here were the tactical skill and the perfection of form, acquired through long and patient exercise; of what use here the example and the personal influence of a Hays or a Hancock, a Brooke or a Bar-

¹ The command of General Hays's brigade devolved upon Colonel John S. Crocker, Ninety-third New York.

low? How can a battle be fitly ordered in such a tangle of wood and brush, where troops can neither be sent straight to their destination nor seen and watched over, when, after repeatedly losing direction and becoming broken into fragments in their advance through thickets and jungles, they at last make their way up to the line of battle, perhaps at the point they were designed to reinforce, perhaps far from it? Here chance has heaped up regiments till the men are six or eight deep; there, a single thin line continues the front, westward or eastward; here, again, a gap appears. Appears, did I say? No, it does not appear at a greater distance than fifty or a hundred yards; but it exists, nevertheless, and through this accidental breach may, at any moment, enter a hostile column which shall disrupt and throw back the whole line, so that the extremity of valor shall be useless; so that the highest soldiership shall be in vain; so that brigades shall not know whether the fire from which men are dropping by hundreds in their ranks comes from the foe or from their own comrades who have lost their way in the tangled forest.¹ It will never cease to be an object of amazement to me that, with such a tract in prospect, the character of it being known, in general, to army headquarters through the Chancellorsville campaign, in which General Meade and General Humphreys

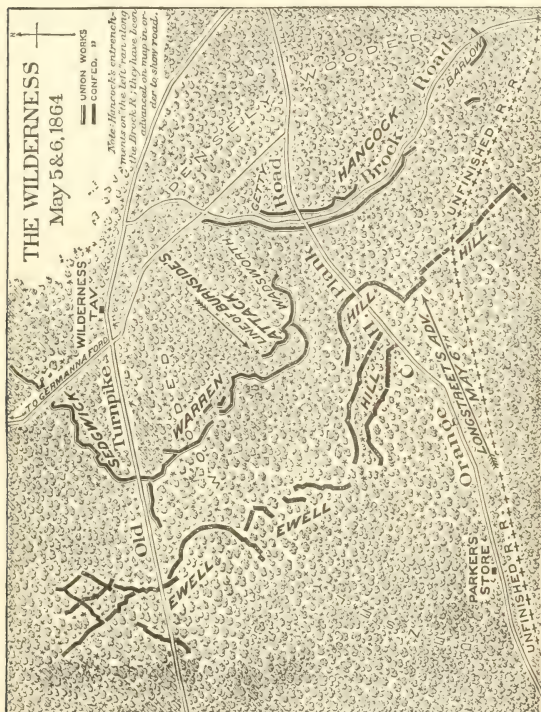
¹ "One tangled mass of stunted evergreen, dwarf chestnut, oak and hazel, with an undergrowth of low-limbed bristling shrubs, making the forest almost impenetrable." It is thus that Badeau describes the Wilderness, and it is as follows he describes a battle in such a country. "A wrestle as blind as at midnight; a gloom that made manœuvres impracticable; a jungle where regiments stumbled on each other and on the enemy by turns, firing sometimes into their own ranks, and guided often only by the crackling of the bushes or the cheers and cries that arose from the depths around."

had taken a prominent part the year before, a supreme effort was not made, on the 4th of May, to carry the Army of the Potomac either through these jungles toward Mine Run, or past it, toward Spottsylvania; and thus to reach positions which, while far from being as advantageous as the open country around Gettysburg and Sharpsburg, should be, at least, more tolerable than that in which the encounter of May 5th took place: positions in which the magnificent artillery of the Army of the Potomac could come into play; in which the high tactical efficiency of its infantry could be brought to bear; in which the courage and skill of commanding officers could have their due effect. As it was, of the one hundred and fifty guns accompanying the infantry corps into the Wilderness, there was not real use for one third in that battle; while the ablest general was able to control his men and influence their actions in only the faintest and remotest degree.

When night fell on the 5th of May the woods were full of the wounded, as of the dead; yet the utmost exertions of the medical staff and the Ambulance Corps could not avail to bring off the sufferers. The undergrowth was so dense that it was almost impossible to find the victims of the afternoon's battle; and the hostile lines were so close that any movement over the intervening ground quickly brought down a heavy fire. During the night Grant, Meade, and Humphreys were earnestly engaged in preparing for the struggle of the coming day. On either side fresh troops were coming up: Anderson's division of Hill's Corps, with Longstreet's powerful corps, from Orange Court House; Burnside's Ninth Union Corps, from the line of the Rappahannock. The relative value of these reinforcements was far from equal.

Burnside's corps was in numbers only one-fifth of

Grant's infantry ; while, with the exception of one veteran division, Potter's, lack of experience and discipline



on the part of those troops reduced their efficiency far below their numerical importance. It was therefore for the interest of the Union army that the encounter should

take place at the earliest possible hour in the morning. With this view, the commander-in-chief decided to attack at half-past four of the 6th of May. That attack he determined to make against the Confederate right, upon the Plank Road: that is, from Hancock's front.

In the latter view, Getty's division was directed to continue on the Plank Road, while Wadsworth's division of the Fifth Corps, which had fought its way, the afternoon previous, down to a point not far north of the Plank Road and somewhat more advanced westward than Hancock's general line, was to attack simultaneously with the Second Corps, in the expectation of reaching the left flank of Hill, whose corps should be fully engaged by Hancock in front. Wadsworth had been reinforced by a brigade of Robinson's division of the Fifth Corps, commanded by General Baxter, formerly lieutenant-colonel of the Seventh Michigan. Meanwhile Sedgwick and Warren, with the remaining divisions of the Sixth and Fifth Corps, to the northward, should occupy Ewell so closely as to prevent his sending reinforcements to Hill. In a word, Hill was to be crushed by the attack of Hancock's four divisions of the Second Corps with Getty's division of the Sixth Corps, upon his front, and of Wadsworth's division of the Fifth, upon his left and rear.

This was to conclude the first episode of the day. The second was to open with the arrival of Burnside's Ninth Corps from the bridge over the Rapidan, directly opposite the Union centre. Assuming Hill's corps to have been disrupted by the tremendous assault preparing against him, Burnside was relied upon to pierce the Confederate centre, Ewell being kept occupied by the real or feigned attacks of the Fifth and Sixth Corps, which would become more serious as news of success should

arrive from the south. Hancock was to command about one-half the army, six divisions. The remaining divisions of the Fifth and Sixth Corps, with Burnside's troops, expected to arrive shortly after light, were to remain under the personal observation and direction of General Meade, whose headquarters, with Grant's, were established at the Old Wilderness Tavern, behind Warren's line.

It has been said that Hancock was to begin at half-past four. In order to perfect the preparations required for so great an enterprise, involving such vast bodies of troops operating in so difficult a country, General Meade requested General Grant to authorize a delay until six o'clock; but this the commander-in-chief was unwilling to permit, assenting reluctantly to name five o'clock. At that hour Hancock advanced to the attack; but already, a few minutes before, Ewell had opened on Sedgwick in order to relieve the anticipated pressure on Hill and to give time for Longstreet to get up.

The fire thus kindled swept fast down the line from the right, across the front of Warren. Wadsworth advanced gallantly to his appointed work of striking Hill's flank; and promptly at five o'clock the divisions of Birney and Mott, with Getty's division of the Sixth, and Carroll's and Owen's brigades, from Gibbon's, all under the general command of Birney, threw themselves furiously upon the Confederate intrenchments which crossed the Plank Road. The attack and the defence were alike of the most desperate nature. The night had given time for commanders to rectify their lines and get their troops in hand; the Confederates were near, and the contest at once become close and savage. The impetus of that well-prepared assault could not be resisted: Hill's troops gave way. Hancock's men leaped, first a log entrenchment,

and then, three or four hundred yards farther back, a line of rifle-pits; in less than an hour the Confederate right was routed and in flight, colors and prisoners were taken, and for the moment all presaged a complete victory for the Union arms.

The Confederates were driven more than a mile through the forest, almost to their wagon trains. The Confederate commander-in-chief, who had from the first made his headquarters with Hill, threw himself among the troops and used every exertion to rally the broken brigades which had recoiled from that terrible assault. But now three causes were combining to relieve the pressure upon the Confederate right, and to give the Army of Northern Virginia that one chance of which it knew so well how to take advantage. The Union columns had become terribly mixed and disordered in their forward movement, under the excitement and bewilderment of battle, through woods so dense that at the best no body of troops could possibly preserve their alignment. In some cases they were heaped up in unnecessary strength; elsewhere great gaps appeared; men, and even officers, had lost their regiments in the jungles; the advance had not been, could not have been, made uniformly from right to left, and the line of battle ran here forward, and there backward, through the forest; thousands had fallen in the furious struggle; the men in front were largely out of ammunition. Moreover, Wadsworth's advance southward had brought him down upon the right flank of Birney, and crowded that division greatly in toward the left. So great was the disorder that General Birney, whom Hancock had placed in command of the attack, took the responsibility of staying the advance and directing the division commanders to rectify their lines before proceeding farther. He then rode back to Gen-

eral Hancock, who had taken his station at the junction of the Brock and Plank Roads, to report what he had done.

A second cause was now entering to give the Confederate arms relief. This was the arrival of Kershaw's division of Longstreet's corps, coming up from the distant rear. These troops, undismayed by the signs of wreck which met their view on every side, moved gallantly into action against Hancock's left, which was farthest advanced, and, throwing themselves with the utmost determination upon that portion of our line, forced it back till it came abreast of the centre.

The third, and even more important, cause which now operated to check the course of Hancock's victory, and even to turn it to defeat and mourning, was a misunderstanding, never explained, between himself and General Gibbon as to the disposition to be made of the forces under the command of the latter officer. Even while Hancock was forming his columns for attack, before break of day, he had been embarrassed by intelligence from army headquarters that the advance of Longstreet's corps, instead of coming up in rear and in support of Hill, was bearing off southward, moving along the Catharpin Road, as if to pass around our left flank and penetrate into our rear; and he had been especially warned that, in all his arrangements for the day, he must provide fully for the exigencies which might arise in that quarter. Hancock had at his command no means of ascertaining the truth of the reports regarding Longstreet, and was bound to proceed as if they might be true. He accordingly placed General Gibbon in charge of the left, giving him all the artillery massed there and the infantry of Barlow. General Gibbon, than whom no man knew better the use of artillery, disposed his great battery of

forty pieces upon the comparatively high and clear ground which we spoke of in connection with the first day's fight, and placed his infantry in position to support the guns. Had Longstreet, indeed, approached from that quarter, there is no reason to doubt that he would have met a terrible repulse.

Before Birney moved out, his line was in connection with Gibbon's, on the Brock Road; but when Birney went forward, at five o'clock, Gibbon remained in position, and the farther Birney advanced the wider became the interval between his troops and Gibbon's. The arrival of Kershaw's Confederate division had already brought a heavy pressure on Birney's left, and caused great anxiety to himself and to Hancock. Two of Gibbon's own brigades, Owen's and Carroll's, had followed Birney's and Mott's divisions up the Plank Road, in the early morning, and Gibbon's remaining brigade, Webb's, had not long after to be sent up the road to relieve Getty's division, which had sustained heavy losses, including its gallant commander, who was severely wounded.

The battle was now about to be resumed on our side, after the pause needed to rectify the formation, to reorganize, as well as could be done in the dense woods, the shattered troops, and to replace those which had suffered most severely by brigades from the second line. Stevenson's small division of the Ninth Corps had reported at the junction of the Brock and Plank Roads. Of this, Leasure's brigade had been sent down the Brock Road, in reserve against Longstreet's possible attack; Caruth's brigade had been sent forward to support Birney. Wadsworth's division, having accomplished its special task, in the first charge, was now formed on Birney's right, in prolongation of his line. Still farther to the right, as General Meade announced through a staff offi-

cer, Burnside, with two divisions, was advancing into the space between Hancock and Warren, meeting, thus far, little resistance and heading directly for Parker's Store, threatening the flank and rear of the troops in front of Birney. This heavy concentration of forces on the Union left and centre seemed to promise a speedy and complete triumph ; but the promise was a most fallacious one ; Burnside's reported attack proved to be unreal ; the interval between Birney and Gibbon was still unfilled ; and powerful reinforcements were at once stiffening Hill's resistance in front, and aiming at the dangerous gap in the Union line. Field's division of Longstreet's corps had followed close on Kershaw's, coming upon the field at the double-quick ; and was, in turn, followed by Anderson's division of Hill's corps, giving the Confederates more fresh troops than they had at the opening of the battle. Moreover, intelligence was received that Cutler's brigade, on the left of Warren's corps, had been driven from its position in great disorder ; and General Birney was obliged to detach two brigades to reoccupy the ground and hold back the enemy seeking to penetrate between Warren and Hancock.

The misunderstanding to which we have alluded, as bringing about such fatal consequences, related to the disposition of Barlow's division, which, with the artillery, was under the command of General Gibbon, facing down the Brock Road. Several incidents had conspired to increase the apprehensions felt at daybreak that this was the point at which Longstreet's attack was to be delivered. Heavy firing had been heard in the direction of Todd's Tavern, supposed to signify an encounter between the enemy and Sheridan's cavalry ; and a column of Union convalescents, sent after the army on the wrong road, had been seen, at the distance of about two miles, wending its way around

our left, and had been mistaken for Confederate infantry. Notwithstanding, however, the grave possibilities attending the left, General Hancock determined to withdraw Barlow's division from the Brock Road, and send it forward to join the left of the forces at the front. In his official report of the battle of the Wilderness, General Hancock states that he so instructed General Gibbon; and this declaration General Hancock repeated to the end, asserting it in letters written within a short time of his death. Morgan and Mitchell both affirmed the same thing. On the other hand, General Gibbon as clearly and persistently declares that he did not receive such instructions; that while the "pros and cons" of the situation were discussed, the definitive order to send in Barlow was not given. Only Frank's brigade from Barlow had gone forward. This, after severe fighting, had secured a place on the left of Birney's line.

Whatever may be the true explanation, the consequences of the failure to send forward the division of Barlow, the largest division in the army, were momentous. The Confederate line was now being greatly strengthened at the front, where Birney, Wadsworth, and Mott were delivering a furious attack, and, at the same time, was being rapidly lengthened in a direction which would soon cause Birney to be taken in rear from his left. As yet, the latter danger had not made itself manifest; but the strain at the front had become terrible, as the disordered masses of our troops encountered the fresh divisions of Field and Anderson.

In this moment of anxiety every ear was turned to catch the sound of Burnside's assault, with his two divisions, upon the enemy's left and rear, toward Parker's Store. Two hours had passed since Hancock had been told that this was then taking place, but as yet not a

sound from that direction told that Burnside had got to work; and it was to be hours yet before this promised assistance to our hard-pressed troops was to be given—assistance it could be hardly called, for, when Burnside at last made his attack, Hancock had already been driven back to the Brock Road.

The crisis was now fast approaching. The enemy, having discovered the gap in our line, where Barlow's division should have been, drew down four brigades—G. T. Anderson's, of Field's division; Mahone's, of R. H. Anderson's division; Wofford's, of Kershaw's division and Davis', of Heth's division—to find their way around Birney's flank. These troops, moving by their right, reached the bed of the unfinished Fredericksburg Railroad, and there formed, facing north, for their decisive charge. At eleven o'clock they moved forward with an impetuosity characteristic of Confederate flank attacks. Frank's brigade, which had already lost heavily and was nearly out of ammunition, was struck on end, broken into fragments, and hurled back in dire disorder. The next troops encountered comprised McAllister's brigade of Mott's division, and these too, although they had partially changed front on the alarm given by the attack on Frank, were quickly overlapped, crushed, and driven back. Advised now, by the firing and shouting of the turning column, of the success of this movement against our flank, the Confederate divisions of Kershaw, Field, and Anderson threw themselves with great impetuosity upon the front of the Union forces, and after a desperate struggle our troops began to give way. Perceiving the hopelessness of any attempt to repair the disaster on his left, Hancock made the utmost exertions to hold the advanced position which we had occupied to the north of the Plank Road, "refusing" his left. Had it been on

open ground, in plain view, Hancock's command of men, his inspiring presence, and his great tactical skill, might have availed ; but in the tangled forest, with the troops in the condition in which more than six hours of hard fighting had left them, there was not time for this. On the left, Mott's division was fast crumbling away, under the fire upon their flank ; on the right, the heroic Wadsworth had been killed, at the head of his division, and his regiments were staggering under the terrific blows of the encouraged and exultant enemy ; in the centre, Birney's division and the brigades of Carroll, Owen, and Webb, worn with fighting and depleted by their enormous losses, were being slowly pressed back. Down the Plank Road thousands of broken men were going to the rear, giving to the onlooker the impression of a perfect rout. In this situation, Hancock, on Birney's representations, reluctantly gave the order to withdraw the troops to the Brock Road.

It was now high noon ; and the battle of the Wilderness, in all its essential features, had been fought and finished. A great assault had been made in the early morning, with overwhelming success ; but the disorder of the troops and the powerful reinforcements arriving upon the field on the Confederate side, consisting of the divisions of Kershaw, Field, Anderson, had stayed and then turned the tide of battle. The Union side was not reinforced as fast, or, owing to the character of the country, as intelligently, as the Confederate ; Burnside had delayed for hours, as at Antietam ; and, at last, the entrance of four brigades into the gap between Mott and Barlow disrupted our line, and caused the whole to be thrown back violently and in disorder. But, while the stream of fugitives would not have allowed anyone standing at the junction of the Brock and Plank Roads,

at noon of the 6th of May, to think anything else than that the whole left wing of the Army of the Potomac had gone to pieces, things were far from being so bad as that. Through the forest the steadier troops were falling back, in as good order as the tangled thickets would permit, still facing the foe. In half an hour more the intrenchments along the verge of the Brock Road, which the troops had left in the morning for their great charge, were filled with armed men—much broken up, it is true, alike by advance and by retreat, but not men whom it was safe to attack in position. The losses in killed and wounded had been enormous; but the enemy, notwithstanding their great success, had captured comparatively few prisoners, and had been themselves so severely punished that they made no attempt to follow up our retreating troops on the right of the Plank Road, and did little in the way of annoying Frank's and Mott's men falling back from the left.

The question now is, Will the enemy, relying on their success in the late encounter, take the initiative and attack our troops along the Brock Road? Should they do so at once, the result will be doubtful. We have, in perfect form, three brigades of Barlow's division, Leasure's brigade of Stevenson's division of the Ninth Corps, and a brigade of Getty's division of the Sixth Corps, none of which have been engaged. All the men remaining belong to brigades which have been in the desperate fighting of the morning, and have been dragged hither and thither, forward and backward, to right and to left, through the thickets, until they have been greatly scattered. On the right of the Plank Road, where the troops came back under orders, the regiments are generally entire, though greatly depleted by losses and by straggling; but on the left of the plank road, many regiments are to be found

in companies or squads. Thousands have fallen in the fight and are still lying in the woods, which, to intensify the confusion and horror, have taken fire in many places in front of the Brock Road. But in the lines now formed in the trenches along the Brock Road are men as good as ever fired a shot in battle, and, though much disorganized, the command is, in general, not demoralized. The dispersion of regiments has, in the main, been the result purely of the natural obstructions, and of rapid and bewildering movements in the gloom of the forest. Should Longstreet give an hour or two to get officers and men together, out in the sunlight along the open road, he will find his old antagonists on hand to receive him with right good-will.

That respite is given. Just as Jackson, riding out in front of his troops after his great victory at Chancellorsville, May 2d, 1863, to survey the ground over which he purposed to follow up his victory, fell mortally wounded under the fire of his own men, so Longstreet, on this 6th of May, 1864, having thrown back the Second Corps and its supporting divisions, largely through the enterprise of the flanking column, received a volley while riding down the front of the brigades that had made this decisive movement, which severely wounded him and killed General Jenkins. Such an accident, occurring at such a time, was fraught with momentous consequences. The command of Longstreet's corps devolved upon General R. H. Anderson; and General Lee, arriving on the ground, postponed the attack.

On our side the time was well improved—soldiers sought their regiments along the line; and many of the stragglers returned from the rear, whither they had gone believing all was lost; ammunition was served out; the men, who had taken their hasty breakfast at four o'clock,

nibbled their hard-tack and ate their salt pork, and straightway felt better. The sunlight into which they had emerged cheered alike body and soul. The normal influence of commanders and staffs was restored, now that they could once more be seen, as they rode up and down the Brock Road, completing the preparations to receive the enemy. Word was passed along the line that Burnside was "going in on the right."

Among the wounded of the morning had been Colonel S. S. Carroll, commanding Gibbon's third brigade. Meeting Carroll with his arm bound up, General Hancock asked him whom he would wish to have assigned to command his brigade, to which Carroll replied, with spirit, that he had not yet left the field, and proposed to command his own brigade himself. The events of the next few hours were to show that it was well he did so, well both for him and for the Second Corps. Meanwhile, Hancock, determined to know what the enemy was doing in his immediate front, placed Leasure's small brigade of the Ninth Corps, about one thousand strong, in line of battle at right angles to the intrenchments, their right resting about one hundred yards therefrom, and sent it forward to sweep his front. This order was executed by Colonel Leasure with intelligence and spirit, the brigade crossing the entire front of Mott and Birney, encountering only a small force of the enemy, which it drove away, and then resumed its position in support of the main line, near the Plank Road. At about two o'clock Lyle's brigade, from the right, reported to General Hancock, together with two regiments of heavy artillery. By three o'clock Hancock had his troops again in such form that he was ready for the enemy.

Generals Meade and Grant, however, were not disposed to be content with a defensive position, and orders were

received from general headquarters to prepare for an attack all along the line at six o'clock. That order was destined to be anticipated by the enemy's initiative, for at 4.15 P.M. our skirmishers were driven in, and the Confederates advanced against the intrenchments on the Brock Road. The attack was a real one, but was not made with great spirit; nor, it must be confessed, was the response from our side as hearty as it was wont to be. The enemy's line advanced to within about one hundred yards, and then halted and commenced firing, to which our troops replied, with noise enough, but keeping too much down behind the log intrenchments and thus discharging their muskets upward. The breastworks had now taken fire at more than one point, from the dried leaves and twigs in front, kindled by the discharges of the musketry. The heat at times became intense, and the smoke, blown backward over the intrenchments, not only concealed the enemy from view, but blinded and stifled our men. At last, in the most unexpected and unnecessary form, came a break in our lines, just at the junction of the Brock and Plank Roads. Some of Mott's troops in the second line gave way, without the slightest cause other than excitement and the strain, the labors and the losses of the morning; and a portion of General J. H. Hobart Ward's brigade, of Birney's division, rushed pell-mell to the rear, their commander jumping upon a caisson, which was driven rapidly off. Following up this altogether undeserved success, a Confederate brigade, understood to be Jenkins', now commanded by Colonel Bratton, dashed forward through the smoke, mounted our intrenchments on our left of the Plank Road, and planted their colors on the breastworks. It was a critical moment, rather from the generally strained and tired condition of our troops, than from the actual number of the

Confederates who had thus gained entrance ; but startling as was the exigency, it was met as promptly. Carroll's brigade at this moment lay in reserve on the right of the Plank Road. The time had come for him to do the same feat of arms which he had performed on the night of the 2d of July at Gettysburg. Putting his brigade into motion, himself, with bandaged arm, at the head of the column, Carroll dashed on the run across the road, and then coming to a "front," charged forward, encountering the exultant Confederates in the very moment of their triumph, and hurling them headforemost over the intrenchments. In an instant the danger had arisen and had disappeared. The enemy fell back into the woods, and in a little while the firing died down along the left. Had Carroll been two minutes later, the same friendly office would have been performed by Brooke's brigade, which came up at the double-quick from the left. Dow's Sixth Maine battery, which was stationed at the crossing of the roads, rendered excellent service at this juncture in repelling the enemy. Half an hour afterward, General Burnside, urged by repeated orders from General Meade, began his long-meditated attack with Potter's and Willcox's divisions, which achieved a temporary success, though too late to be of assistance to Hancock as designed. Burnside was finally checked and brought to stand by Confederate reinforcements arriving on his front. The general attack, which had been ordered for six o'clock, was, by General Meade's orders, postponed, and no more fighting occurred on the left during this day.

It does not belong to the scope of this history to tell of the severe fighting of the morning, on the front of Sedgwick and Warren, who loyally carried out their assigned tasks of keeping Ewell occupied, or of the startling episode of the early evening, when Gordon's and

Johnston's Confederate brigades, getting on the flank of the Sixth Corps, with Pegram attacking in front, rolled up the brigades of Shaler and Seymour, capturing large numbers of prisoners, including both those accomplished general officers. It was at this time that Getty's division of the Sixth Corps, now commanded by Wheaton, was sent back to rejoin its comrades on the right. At a later hour Stevenson's and Wadsworth's divisions were directed to report to their respective corps commanders.

Such, so far as the Second Corps was called to take part in it, was the famous battle of the Wilderness. The corps, sent beyond Todd's Tavern on the morning of the 5th of May, had been ordered to countermarch and move by the way of the Brock Road to the Orange Plank Road, to resist the attempt of Hill's two divisions to penetrate between the columns of Hancock and of Warren. Arriving here about two o'clock, it found Getty confronting large odds, and as soon as its two leading divisions could be brought up and deployed, it went into action, driving the enemy before it, but was deprived, by the coming on of night, of the opportunity to achieve a complete success, Hill having, as it proved, no supports that could have been brought up for many hours to come. On the morning of the 6th, the Second Corps had again attacked, strongly supported by the divisions of Wadsworth and Getty. It had, in a charge made with great spirit, routed Hill's two divisions then in position, as Confederate troops were rarely to be routed; but in pursuing its initial success through the dense and tangled woods, its brigades and regiments had been broken and confused. In this condition it had encountered one fresh Confederate division after another, until, at last, a force of four brigades, searching out the gap which existed in its lines, owing to the failure to send Barlow forward on

Mott's left, struck in flank the troops fighting out the Plank Road, and rolled up Frank's and McAllister's brigades.

This disaster, combined with a renewed assault by three Confederate divisions in front, led to the retirement of the corps, the right generally in fair order, considering the nature of the ground; the left in confusion—confusion due, however, far more to the nature of the physical obstructions than to the actual effect of the very severe fighting that had taken place. Withdrawing, thus, to its original line of the early morning, it had been reorganized and there awaited an attack, which was delivered and repulsed between 4.15 and 5 P.M.; and the corps passed the night of the 6th in the position it had occupied twenty-four hours before.

The losses of the Army of the Potomac, and of Burnside's Ninth Corps (which, until the 24th of May, was not formally treated as a part of that army), on the 5th and 6th of May, comprised 2,265 killed, 10,220 wounded, and 2,902 missing; total, 15,387. Many of the missing were doubtless killed or wounded in the thickets, unobserved by their comrades. The losses of the Second Corps had been 699 killed, 3,877 wounded, 516 missing; total, 5,092.

Among the killed, besides General Hays, had been many valuable officers who were to be severely missed in the ensuing battles of the corps. The field officers killed or mortally wounded were Lieutenant-Colonel Edwin Burt, Third Maine; Lieutenant-Colonel A. B. Chapman, Fifty-seventh New York; Lieutenant-Colonel A. B. Myer, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York; Lieutenant-Colonel Jacob W. Greenawalt, One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania; Lieutenant-Colonel Milton Opp, Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania; Major Henry L. Ab-

bott, Twentieth Massachusetts; Major Thomas Touhy, Sixty-third New York; Major Robert H. Gray, Fourth Maine. Two of these officers deserve especial notice in a history of the Second Corps. Colonel Chapman had, on a score of battlefields, displayed the highest soldierly qualities; his figure had always been conspicuous in the front line of battle; and whether on the skirmish line or in the column of attack, he had proved himself one of the bravest and most capable officers in the corps. Major Abbott was at the time of his early death greatly distinguished for his efficiency as a commander in camp, and for his gallantry in battle. Justly did General Hancock in his official report, say of him: "This brilliant young officer, by his courageous conduct in action, the high state of discipline in his regiment, and his devotion to duty at all times, had obtained the highest reputation among his commanding officers."

The other commissioned officers killed or mortally wounded, so far as I have been able to complete the list, were Captains Robert S. Seabury and James B. Turner, Assistant Adjutant-Generals; Captain H. T. Walcott, Fortieth New York; Captains Edwin Libby and Amos B. Wooster, Fourth Maine; Captain Andrew Nickerson and Lieutenant Milton Leonard, Third Michigan; Captain P. T. Boyle, Sixty-third New York; Captain Patrick Nolan, Seventy-first New York; Captain Patrick Ryder and Lieutenant John Sparks, Eighty-eighth New York; Captains John Bailey and Dennis E. Barnes, and Lieutenants Norman F. Eldridge and Robert L. Gray, Ninety-third New York; Captains George W. Harvey and George O. Getchell, Third Maine; Captain W. W. Hulser, One Hundred and Fifty-second New York; Captain Henry Quigley and Lieutenant Edward C. Sutherland, Twentieth Indiana; Captain Richard L. R.

Shreve, Seventy-second Pennsylvania; Captain George W. McCulloch; Captains James Hamilton and William J. Clyde, One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania; Captain Albert Buxton and Lieutenant Thomas J. Tarbell, Second United States Sharp Shooters; Captains George W. Rose and Wilberforce Hurlbert, Fifth Michigan; Captain Joseph S. Hills and Lieutenant John U. Woodfin, Sixteenth Massachusetts; Lieutenant H. J. Caldwell, Fourteenth Indiana; Captain Samuel Fisk and Lieutenant Frederick Shalk, Fourteenth Connecticut; Captains James A. McIntyre and Charles V. Smith, Twenty-eighth Massachusetts; Lieutenant Channing L. Pettibone, Fourth Ohio; Lieutenant John M. Fogg, Twelfth New Jersey; Lieutenant Michael McGeough, First United States Sharp Shooters; Lieutenants Horace G. Hill and James W. Snedeker, One Hundred and Eleventh New York; Lieutenant John J. Lockwood, One Hundred and Twentieth New York; Lieutenant Christopher C. Gray, Fourth Maine; Lieutenant Henry Chamberlain, Seventieth New York; Lieutenant John Kelly, Eighty-second New York; Lieutenant Benjamin Doe, Seventeenth Maine; Lieutenant Christopher Smith, Ninety-ninth Pennsylvania.

Among the many field-officers wounded were Colonel Carroll, commanding brigade; Colonel John Pulford, Fifth Michigan; Colonel George West, Seventeenth Maine; Colonel Peter Sides, Fifty-seventh Pennsylvania; Colonel C. A. Craig, One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania; Lieutenant-Colonel John Danks, Sixty-third Pennsylvania. At Corps Headquarters, Captain E. P. Brownson was severely wounded on the 6th of May.

Major C. P. Mattocks, Seventeenth Maine, was captured.

The losses of the Second Corps were distributed by divisions as follows:

| Command. | Killed. | Wounded. | Missing. | Aggregate. |
|------------------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| Staff and Escort ..... | .... | 2 | .... | 2 |
| Artillery Brigade..... | 1 | 10 | .... | 11 |
| First Division..... | 128 | 652 | 101 | 881 |
| Second Division..... | 164 | 937 | 156 | 1,257 |
| Third Division..... | 340 | 1,715 | 187 | 2,242 |
| Fourth Division..... | 66 | 561 | 72 | 699 |
| Total | 699 | 3,877 | 516 | 5,092 |

The losses were thus distributed as between commissioned officers and enlisted men.

| | Commissioned officers. | Enlisted men. | Total. |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Killed | 36 | 663 | 699 |
| Wounded..... | 192 | 3,685 | 3,877 |
| Missing..... | 18 | 493 | 516 |
| Aggregate | 246 | 4,846 | 5,092 |

A comparison of the proportion of killed and wounded who were commissioned officers, with the like proportion at Gettysburg, becomes highly instructive as to the nature of the fighting in the Wilderness. At Gettysburg, of the killed ¹ 8½ per cent., and of the wounded 8 per cent., were commissioned officers. In the Wilderness but 5.7 per cent. of the killed, and 5 per cent. of the wounded, were officers. This great disparity in the proportion of officers to enlisted men, among the killed and wounded,

¹ These statements do not include those who subsequently died of their wounds.

was due to the difference in the topographical conditions of the two battles. At Gettysburg the fighting was almost wholly in the open. Here not only had the sharpshooter a chance to do the most mischief; but the higher responsibility of officers led them, in critical moments, to expose themselves with a freedom which caused heavy additions to the lists of casualties. In the Wilderness, the greater part of those who fell were struck by men who could not even see them; sounds directed the firing rather than sight. In conditions like those, there was little special exposure of officers, and their share in the casualties sank to something very near their numerical proportion. Of the entire command, on the morning of April 30th, 1864, the proportion of officers was 4.6 per cent. Of the entire number killed and wounded, May 5th to 6th, the proportion of officers was 5 per cent. The slight difference in these ratios we may believe to be wholly accounted for by the higher degree in which officers stayed through the later stages of the fighting; by their being the first to rise up from the ground when a charge was ordered, and by their greater indisposition to seek the shelter of trees in action; not at all by any special direction of the enemy's fire at them, as officers. In a word, that which caused this slight excess of casualties among officers, above their numerical proportion, was subjective, not objective.

The respective losses of the two armies, May 5th and 6th, and the effects produced thereby on the respective strength of the two armies, has been much misunderstood, owing, doubtless, to the fact that this battle is commonly taken as the type of the whole campaign, as when we say "the Wilderness Campaign," whereas it was far from being a typical battle of 1864. Viewed in the light of General Grant's professed policy of

reducing Lee's army by continuous "hammering" or "attrition," the battle of the Wilderness was the most successful, always excepting the glorious but terrible 12th of May, of all the actions of that year. It was true that the Union army had sustained enormous losses; it was likewise true this expenditure of life had not secured any such result as might reasonably have been expected from the superior numbers of that army, had the encounter taken place on ground better suited to tactical manœuvres and to the use of artillery, such as was to be found, in almost any direction, five miles from that unhappy battlefield; but it is also true that Lee's army sustained heavy losses,¹ which, if not equal to those of the Army of the Potomac, were probably as great in proportion to its numbers. In the battle of the Wilderness entrenchments played no such dominant part as they were to play at Spottsylvania, North Anna, Cold Harbor, and Petersburg. The rifle-pits dug and the log entrenchments constructed were generally of a slight character; while very much of the fighting, both on the 5th and on the 6th, was done by the two armies altogether outside of works.

¹ The statement of Confederate losses made in the Medical and Surgical History of the War gives 2,000 killed, 6,000 wounded, and 3,400 missing.

CHAPTER XIV.

TODD'S TAVERN AND PO RIVER.

WHEN the sun went down on the smoking woods of the Wilderness, on the 6th of May, the first great battle of the campaign of 1864 was over and done. Lee had no disposition to renew the action which he had brought on to gain time for bringing up Longstreet's Corps. Besides, he knew the Army of the Potomac well enough to be aware that his greatest advantage was likely to be obtained in the first encounter, in the earliest stages of a movement. After Gettysburg the Confederate commander was very unlikely to attack the Army of the Potomac on a third day. On the Union side, Grant was nowise daunted by the bitter fighting of the 5th and 6th; and in the early morning of the 7th General Birney was directed to make a reconnoissance¹ in force down the Plank Road, to develop the position of the enemy. This was found to be so well retired from our front as to cause Grant to decide not to make a further effort in that direction, but to throw his whole army to the left, with a view to get between Lee and Richmond, or to place himself in a position so threatening as to compel the Confederates to attack. There was an additional reason for this movement at this time, namely, that Butler's

¹ Captain J. C. Briscoe, Fortieth New York, serving on General Birney's staff, distinguished himself greatly on this occasion. Captain Briscoe was wounded at the Salient, May 12th.

army of the James had reached City Point from the south. Grant's ultimate plan of action involved the union of the two armies.

In the execution of this purpose, the cavalry were to hold the roads crossing the Po River, by which the enemy would have their most direct route from the Wilderness down to Spottsylvania Court House, the point selected by Grant as his immediate objective. The Fifth was to take the lead of the infantry corps. It was expected, by a rapid march down the Brock Road, under cover of the cavalry, to occupy Spottsylvania, to be reinforced by the Sixth Corps coming up on its left by a road interior to the Brock Road, and subsequently by the Ninth Corps coming up on the left of the Sixth. Meanwhile, when Warren's Corps should have passed by, leaving open the Brock Road for Hancock, the Second Corps, previously the left of the army, should move to Todd's Tavern, about half way to Spottsylvania, becoming thus the right of the army; and should here hold the Catharpin Road, which, running east and west, crosses, nearly at right angles, the north and south roads the army was to occupy in the turning movement thus initiated. The Orange & Alexandria Railroad was to be definitively abandoned for Fredericksburg, as the base of operations. The transfer of the vast provision, ammunition, and engineer-trains of so great an army, and of the hospitals burdened with thousands of wounded, from one line to another, was a task of a difficulty inconceivable to one who has not witnessed such operations. The trains were to begin to move at 3 P.M. of May 7th; Warren was not to set out until dark.

The attempt to seize Spottsylvania in advance of the Confederates failed through one of those misadventures which are so frequent in war. General Lee had become

aware that the Union commander contemplated a movement in some direction; and to his mind all the signs of change pointed toward Fredericksburg. He therefore ordered Anderson, who had succeeded the wounded Longstreet, to move on the morning of the 8th of May to Spottsylvania. Anderson, however, was so far influenced by the fact that the woods in which his corps lay were still burning, from the fires kindled in the fighting of the 6th, that he determined to set out on the evening of the 7th and make a night march of it, a distance of about fifteen miles. By this it came about that, when the head of Warren's column, having been delayed by Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry on the Brock Road, arrived at Spottsylvania, anticipating a contest with Stuart only, it found Anderson already in position, in strong force. The latter's instructions from General Lee had not contemplated an attempt by the Union forces to seize Spottsylvania; but finding Stuart heavily engaged with infantry, he at once set about constructing breastworks. Warren, coming up with the head of his column, having no advices as to any general movement of the enemy, and believing that only cavalry was in his front, attacked with slight preparation. Griffin's and Robinson's divisions, thrown impetuously in, were repulsed with heavy loss, General Robinson falling severely wounded. This check compelled Warren to bring up his remaining division; and hard fighting ensued, with varying success, but with the general result that the Fifth Corps line was drawn close in front of Anderson's breastworks, whereupon Warren determined to await the arrival of Sedgwick. It was not until late in the afternoon that the second attack was made by Sedgwick and Warren. General Badeau evidently means to be understood as reflecting upon the spirit in which the attack was made; but

that person is so eager to sacrifice reputations, as a burnt offering of sweet savor upon the altar of Grant's fame, that we may well disregard his imputations. Whatever might or might not have been done on the late afternoon of the 8th of May, Anderson's line was not carried before night, and already other Confederate columns were pressing to his support.

Meanwhile Hancock was, during the whole day of the 8th, performing the part assigned him, at Todd's Tavern, of holding the Catharpin Road against any attempt of the enemy to cut the north and south roads by which Grant's troops and trains were moving. That attempt was very near to being made, for General Lee, full of his thought that Grant was moving on Fredericksburg, had ordered Early, in temporary command of Hill's corps, to move by Todd's Tavern to Spottsylvania Court House, as a part of his own general plan to push his army rapidly southward to interpose between Fredericksburg and Richmond. Whether General Lee, had he known that the Army of the Potomac was moving to Spottsylvania, would have chosen to assail it by an attack out the Catharpin Road we cannot know. Certain it is that Early, arriving in front of Hancock's position, interpreted his orders to mean essentially that he was to go to Spottsylvania, and not that he was to fight a battle at Todd's Tavern; and so, his designated route being barred against him by a force which would, at the least, have exacted a hard fight and a long delay before letting him pass, Early made no serious efforts to break through here.

Hancock had arrived somewhat later than was anticipated, owing to the occupation of the Brock Road by the Fifth Corps, his leading brigade not being able to move out of its entrenchments until daylight, at which time it had been assumed in the general plan that the corps

would be at the Tavern. Nothing, however, occurred to make the delay important. On arriving, Miles, with his own brigade of infantry, a brigade of Gregg's cavalry and a battery was sent forward on the Catharpin Road, nearly to Corbin's Bridge, where it remained until late in the afternoon. About 5.30 P.M., while Miles was retiring, under orders, he encountered Mahone's division moving under the instructions from General Lee which we have recited. The collision was sharp; but Miles, twice facing about, beat back the enemy advancing upon him. Smyth's brigade was advanced to Miles' support.

Expectation of battle was now at its height, as it was not doubted that the Confederates were attempting to "counter" upon General Meade, answering his advance upon Spottsylvania by a movement into his right and rear. Inasmuch as Gibbon's division had been called for at 1.30 P.M. to move down toward Warren, to support the Fifth Corps, if required, Burton's brigade of heavy artillery was sent up by General Meade at 6.30 to reinforce Hancock in view of the anticipated attack. A reconnoissance was at this time made, out the Brock Road, in consequence of a report, which proved to be unfounded, that the enemy were advancing from that direction. And so the Second Corps stood to arms, all the afternoon and into the early evening, believing that another of its great days of battle had come and that it was to be called upon to resist a supreme effort of the Confederate general, who had shown such capacity for dangerous initiative, to break through into Meade's right rear and to turn the whole course of the campaign. But the sun went down, and darkness came on, and the great battle of Todd's Tavern was never fought. It is not known how many men had fallen in the skirmishing of the day, and in Miles' brush with Mahone; but among the killed

were Captains William A. Collins and Thomas G. Morrison, of the Sixty-first New York, and Lieutenant Perin C. Judkins, First United States Sharp Shooters. The latter officer was serving on the staff of the Second Brigade, Third Division.

During the night of the 8th to 9th of May, the sounds reported from the picket line intimated a concentration of troops in our front; and when morning came there were indications of an advance by the enemy upon Birney's front, along the Catharpin Road. This caused Gibbon's division to be drawn in somewhat, perhaps a mile, from its advanced position, toward Spottsylvania, so that it made connection with Birney; and the brigade of heavy artillery in the rear was again called up. The anticipated attack was, however, not delivered. It was during this interval of suspense that the sad intelligence was brought to the headquarters of the Second Corps that Sedgwick, the beloved commander of the Sixth Corps, had fallen.

THE CROSSING OF THE PO.

By noon the information received as to the movements of the enemy was sufficiently clear to establish the probability that no serious attempt would be made to penetrate into the Union rear by way of Todd's Tavern. Mott's division¹ and Burton's heavy artillery were accordingly left to hold the Catharpin Road at this point; and the other divisions were, under General Meade's orders, despatched southeastward, down the Brock Road,

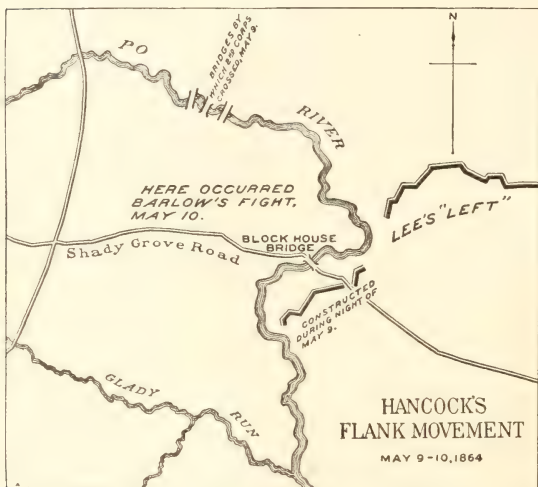
¹ Still later in the day, the enemy having disappeared from the vicinity of the Tavern, Mott's division was sent down to the left of Sedgwick's Sixth Corps, with which it operated throughout the day of the 10th.

to and beyond the position occupied by Gibbon the afternoon before. Here the three divisions were drawn up on high open ground overlooking the valley of the Po River.

While the troops were coming into position General Hancock rode forward toward Spottsylvania, and, on a hill-side overlooking the river, he dismounted and joined Generals Grant and Meade in consultation on the situation developed by the failure of the plan to seize Spottsylvania. While the conversation was in progress a Confederate wagon train was seen passing along a road on the opposite side of the river, within such exasperatingly easy range that a battery was ordered up to open fire upon it. The effect of the first few shots was to create a wild stampede among the non-belligerents and to send the wagons flying to cover. How serious was the intention which underlay the next step it is not easy to say; but it was not without important consequences. Hancock was directed to throw a division over the river and try to capture the train. This, perhaps, would have been effected if the teams had not been goaded into a wild flight by the shelling administered to them. At any rate, Barlow's division, Brooke leading, crossed, though with much difficulty, the banks being steep and densely wooded; but the obstacles were overcome with energy, and the division was soon over, followed at once by the divisions of Gibbon below, and Birney above; for now something besides the wagon train (at this time safe within the Confederate lines) was pressing upon the mind of the commander-in-chief. He thought he saw an opportunity of getting, in this way, upon the flank of the Confederate force at Spottsylvania. Had the crossing been ordered earlier a good beginning of a serious turning movement might have been effected. But it

was nearly dark when the last two divisions succeeded in getting over, Birney having to drive the enemy's cavalry and a section of artillery from a mill-race at which he crossed, and Hancock found it impossible to push the troops forward, as he desired, to the bridge on the Shady Grove and Block House Road, which led directly into Lee's rear.

The following sketch shows the general relation of the



roads and bridges with which this movement of Hancock was concerned.

Owing to the lateness of the crossing, the distance and the density of the woods, Hancock was only able by dark to get his skirmishers up to the bridge. And here, in the space between Gladly Run and the Po, the troops

rested for the night. Engineering details were actively employed, however, in building bridges at three points, and before morning communications were well established.

THE BATTLE OF PO RIVER.

The morning of the 10th of May found three divisions of the Second Corps across the Po, threatening Lee's left flank, Barlow's division in advance being formed to face eastward on the Block House and Shady Grove Church Road, just where that road crosses the river to run into the Confederate rear. As soon as it was light Hancock caused a reconnoissance to be made of the Confederate position, to ascertain the feasibility of carrying the bridge by assault. The enemy were seen to be in force in intrenchments which commanded the bridge and its approaches, while the stream had been found by the skirmishers, during the night, to be too deep for fording. It was therefore decided to turn the position, and Brooke's brigade, accompanied by Colonel Morgan, chief of staff, was sent along the river, while General Birney was directed to push three or four regiments out on the Andrews' Tavern road to cover the movement. Brooke succeeded in crossing the river half-way between the bridge and the mouth of Glady Run, throwing out a detachment, under Lieutenant-Colonel John S. Hammill of the Sixty-sixth New York, who pushed his reconnoissance with great vigor and despatch, until the enemy were driven into their works and their real line uncovered.

Hancock now prepared to follow up Brooke's success by throwing across a sufficient force to take in flank and rear the force holding the bridge-head, thereupon to cross with his remaining troops and continue his turning

movement ; but at this moment he received intelligence that an attack was to be made at 5 P.M. upon the enemy opposite the Union centre, near Alsop's, and was directed at once to send down two divisions to join therein. He was also notified that he was to take command of all the troops engaged in the assault. Gibbon at once recrossed to the north bank of the river, and formed on Warren's right ; while Birney followed, his brigades being massed in reserve in rear of Warren. General Hancock accompanied Gibbon and Birney, and proceeded to make an examination of the ground over which the assault was to be delivered. The withdrawal of two divisions had left Barlow alone to hold the position south of the Po, and, of course, put an end to all thoughts of turning Lee's left flank. It also placed Barlow in a singularly exposed and isolated position.

Already, even while Birney was withdrawing, his skirmishers were being driven in by those of Heth's division crossing the Po about the mouth of Glady Run, who, still farther advancing, soon engaged the skirmishers of Barlow. This intelligence, brought to General Meade, caused him much anxiety, and led him to request General Hancock at once to recross the river and attend in person to the withdrawal of his remaining division.

As Hancock, riding rapidly up from the centre, rejoined his troops on the south bank of the Po, the skirmishers of Heth, advancing from the direction of Glady Run, were sharply engaged with the skirmishers of the First Division, a division that had long made skirmishing a profession. It is a melancholy fact that three men out of four who entered the service of the United States left it, if alive, without ever having seen a really good piece of work of this character. Indeed, most regiments in the service had as little idea of skirmishing as an elephant. But

to Barlow's brigades the very life of military service was in a widely extended formation, flexible yet firm, where the soldiers were thrown largely on their individual resources, but remained in a high degree under the control of the resolute, sagacious, keen-eyed officers, who urged them forward, or drew them back, as the exigency of the case required; where every advantage was taken of the nature of the ground, of fences, trees, stones, and prostrate logs; where manhood rose to its maximum and mechanism sank to its minimum, and where almost anything seemed possible to vigilance, audacity, and cool self-possession.

Just at the moment, say 2 P.M., at which the order came to withdraw Barlow, the skirmishers of the advanced brigades, Brooke's and Brown's, after a fine display of address and gallantry, were retiring before the advance of Heth's line of battle. It seemed a pity to interrupt the fight that was imminent; and had it been left to the vote of Barlow and his brigadiers the duel would have come off. A prettier field for such a contest was rarely to be found in that land of tangles and swamps. The forces were far from being unequally matched. A Confederate division was, in general, much larger than a division of Union troops; but Heth's column had suffered heavily in the Wilderness; while Barlow's was at this time much the strongest division of the Army of the Potomac. Never, to the end of the war, did the officers of the First Division, there present, cease to speak with an affectionate sadness of the chance that was that day lost.

In the situation existing, to fight seemed as easy as it was imminent; but to retreat with their backs to a river, the enemy in full advance, was a most critical matter; and such Barlow and Hancock felt it to be. They threw

themselves with their staffs, at the head of the troops. Brooke's and Brown's¹ brigades, with Arnold's battery, which formed the front line, were ordered to fall back and take post on the right of Miles. The enemy were pressing on rapidly and the fire was furious; but these two gallant bodies of veterans retired with the utmost coolness, reaching the position assigned them in perfect order. The first step in the critical operation was accomplished. The next act of General Hancock was to direct that Miles and Smyth should retire to the last crest in front of the bridges. This was rapidly and skilfully done, both brigades being handled to perfection; and the troops, the moment they were in place, began to cover themselves with rails and such other materials as they could lay hands upon. All the batteries except Arnold's were ordered to pass over and take position on the north bank, to sweep the ground over which the enemy must advance. Other batteries had by this time been brought up from below by Colonel Tidball; and Birney's division had moved by its right, to be nearer Barlow in case of disaster. While all this was doing, Heth's troops, doubtless deeming the withdrawal of Miles and Smyth a sign of fear, fell upon the brigades of Brooke and Brown. For a description of the contest which ensued I cannot do better than quote the words of Hancock's official report :

"The combat now became close and bloody; the enemy, in vastly superior numbers, flushed with the anticipation of an easy victory, appeared determined to crush the small force opposing them, and, pressing forward with loud yells, forced their way close up to our line, delivering a terrible musketry fire as they advanced ;

¹ The Third, commanded in the Wilderness by Colonel Frank, here commanded by Colonel H. L. Brown, One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania.

our brave troops again resisted their onset with undaunted resolution ; their fire along the whole line was so continuous and deadly that the enemy found it impossible to withstand it, but broke again and retreated in the wildest disorder, leaving the ground in our front strewn with their dead and wounded.

“During the heat of this contest the woods on the right and in rear of our troops took fire ; the flames had now approached close to our line, rendering it almost impossible to retain the position longer. The last bloody repulse of the enemy had quieted him for a time, and during this lull in the fight General Barlow directed Brooke and Brown to abandon their position and retire to the north bank of the Po. Their right and rear enveloped in the burning woods, their front assailed by overwhelming numbers of the enemy, the withdrawal of the troops was attended with extreme difficulty and peril, but the movement was commenced at once, the men displaying such coolness and steadiness as is rarely exhibited in the presence of dangers so appalling ; it seemed, indeed, that these gallant soldiers were devoted to destruction. The enemy, perceiving that our line was retreating, again advanced, but was again promptly checked by our troops, who fell back through the burning forest with admirable order and deliberation, though, in doing so, many of them were killed and wounded, numbers of the latter perishing in the flames.

“One section of Arnold's battery had been pushed forward by Captain Arnold, during the fight, to within a short distance of Brooke's line, where it had done effective service ; when ordered to retire, the horses attached to one of the pieces, becoming terrified by the fire and unmanageable, dragged the gun between two trees, where it became so firmly wedged that it could not be moved ;

every exertion was made by Captain Arnold and some of the infantry to extricate the gun, but without success ; they were compelled to abandon it. *This was the first gun ever lost by the Second Corps.*

“ Brooke’s brigade, after emerging from the wood, had the open plain to traverse between the Block house road and the Po ; this plain was swept by the enemy’s musketry in front, and by their artillery on the heights above the Block house bridge, on the north side of the river. Brown’s brigade in retiring was compelled to pass through the entire woods in its rear, which was then burning furiously. Although under a heavy fire, it extricated itself from the forest, losing very heavily in killed and wounded. Colonel Brown crossed the river some distance above the pontoon bridge, forming his troops on the right of Brooke, who had also crossed to the north bank on the pontoon bridge.

“ I feel that I cannot speak too highly of the bravery, soldierly conduct, and discipline displayed by Brooke’s and Brown’s brigades on this occasion. Attacked by an entire division of the enemy (Heth’s), they repeatedly beat him back, holding their ground with unyielding courage until they were ordered to withdraw, when they retired with such order and steadiness as to merit the highest praise. Colonel James A. Beaver, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania Volunteers, and Lieutenant-Colonel D. L. Stricker, Second Delaware Volunteers, are particularly mentioned by Colonel Brooke for marked services and conspicuous courage.”

The brigades of Brooke and Brown, one-half of Barlow’s division, were now back again on the north bank of the river. Smyth’s and Miles’ brigade remained. The north bank, far up and down, was lined with artillery and infantry, to cover the withdrawal of this force in the

face of an enemy resolute to destroy it. Colonel Smyth was first ordered to retire by the central (a pontoon) bridge, the upper (extemporized) bridge having already been destroyed by General Hancock's orders. As soon as Smyth had crossed, his command was deployed to protect the crossing of Miles, whose regiments held their line of fence-rails without a flutter. Before Miles could move, the enemy opened a tremendous fire of artillery from the front and from our left, under cover of which their infantry sought to cross the open ground in front of Miles. But our artillery was too numerous and too well placed to allow this long to continue, and after having a caisson or two blown up, their guns were silenced, the advance of their infantry having been even earlier checked. Miles took advantage of the repulse to withdraw rapidly, but in perfect order, by the two bridges. The pontoon bridge was at once taken up; the lower (extemporized) bridge was thoroughly destroyed.

The withdrawal of Barlow's division from the south bank of the Po, in the presence of Heth's division, was magnified by the Confederates into a great victory. General Heth published a congratulatory order to his troops, which was indorsed by Lieutenant-General Hill and by General Lee, praising them for their valor in driving us from our intrenched lines. The simple fact was that the withdrawal took place in consequence of General Meade's explicit and peremptory order; not a regiment gave way for a moment in the critical movement; the Confederates did not hasten the pace by anything they did; our troops retired just when and as they were directed. Among the Confederate losses at this point was General Walker, of Heth's division, severely wounded.

General Badeau expresses the opinion, which is un-

doubtedly the opinion of Grant, that the movement of the Second Corps across the Po had the effect to weaken the Confederate centre, and thus to prepare for the contemplated assault to be delivered there. It is to the latter that we are now to turn our attention.

THE ASSAULTS ON THE LEFT.

It will be remembered that while three divisions of the corps were across the Po, in the early morning of the 10th, bent apparently upon prosecuting a vigorous movement against Lee's left and rear, two of these, Birney's and Gibbon's, were withdrawn, by General Meade's order, to support the Fifth Corps on the centre, in a combined assault on the Confederate works. Hancock had been directed to take command of all the forces here engaged; but the necessity of withdrawing Barlow's division from the south side of the river, under the critical circumstances described, had caused General Meade to ask him to proceed thither and give General Barlow the benefit of that assistance and advice which, in such a situation, a senior may render to the most capable and trusted junior. Meanwhile General Warren sought by the advance of his troops, at points, in considerable force, to obtain information regarding the enemy's position.

The ground around Spottsylvania differed from the country of the Wilderness very greatly, yet the two had much in common; differed, in that the proportion of open ground was here very much larger; had this in common, that, where the forest still remained, it was scrubby and dense, rendering movement in line of battle difficult, and observation over any considerable space impossible.

General Lee, who since the morning of the 8th had

been engaged in fortifying Spottsylvania, had taken the utmost advantage of the nature of the ground, much of his front being covered by tangled woods, almost as difficult to pass through as extensive abattis, though giving free passage to the fire of musketry and artillery.

It was through a wide stretch of forest of this character, that General Warren, at eleven o'clock, advanced two brigades of Gibbon's division, which had been sent down from the right and placed under his orders. The resistance was obstinate, and the troops were soon compelled to retire with loss, but not without gaining the desired information regarding the extent and direction of the enemy's works. A little later, Warren sent forward two of his own divisions, with a view to gain ground for the formation of the column of assault; and although these troops, also, were forced to give way, the view obtained of the enemy's position was such as to induce General Warren to report to General Meade that, in his judgment, a general assault would be successful. This report, combined with the knowledge that considerable bodies of the enemy had been drawn off to their left, to meet the threat of Barlow's advance, led General Meade, about 3.30 P.M., to order the attack on the centre to be made at once. On the left, General H. G. Wright, who had succeeded Sedgwick in command of the Sixth Corps, was ordered to attack with his own corps and Mott's division of the Second. I cannot do better than to quote in full General Humphreys' explicit and careful account of the further operations of this day.

WARREN'S AND HANCOCK'S ATTACKS.

"General Warren, wearing his full uniform, proceeded to assault the enemy's position at once with Crawford's

and Cutler's divisions, and Webb's and Carroll's brigades of Gibbon's division, under Gibbon's orders. Opposite the right of this attacking force the wood in front of the enemy's entrenchments was dense, and filled with a low growth of dead cedar-trees, whose hard, sharp-pointed branches, interlaced and pointed in all directions, made it very difficult for the troops to advance under the heavy artillery and musketry fire they met at the outset. They emerged into the open ground near the entrenchments, with disordered ranks and under a heavy artillery and musketry fire, part direct, part flanking, that swept the whole ground, but went forward, some to the abattis, others to the crest of the parapet, but were all driven back with heavy loss. General Carroll says that the right of his line gained the enemy's breastworks, and his whole line reached the abattis. It is claimed that some of Crawford's men did the same, or it may be, Cutler's. The Official Diary of Longstreet's corps says, 'Some of the enemy succeed in gaining the works but are killed in them.' Brigadier-General Rice, commanding a brigade in Cutler's division, a very gallant officer, was mortally wounded in this assault.

"General Hancock returned to the ground at about 5.30 P.M., just before the close of the assault. He was ordered to renew it at 6.30 P.M., but, under orders, deferred it until 7 P.M., when he attacked with Birney's and Gibbon's divisions, part of the Fifth Corps uniting with him, but with no more success than the preceding attempt. In this second attack the wood was on fire in some places.

UPTON'S ASSAULT.

"The examination of the enemy's works under cover of the skirmishers of the Sixth Corps developed a part

of them which General Wright deemed to be vulnerable to a systematic, resolute attack. The other portions in his front were covered by a wide slashing and had a flanking artillery fire. The vulnerable part¹ was the right of Rodes' front held by Doles' brigade, whose right rested at the west angle of what I have called the apex of the salient, and the part of the apex itself held by the left of Johnson's division. The entrenchment held by Doles was in open ground, two hundred yards from a pine wood with abattis in front and traverses at intervals. In the re-entrant of the line there was a battery with traverses. One hundred yards in rear was a second line partly finished, occupied by a line of battle. A wood-road led from the open ground of the Scott or Shelton house, where the column of attack was formed, directly to the point of attack. Colonel Upton, commanding Second Brigade, First Division, Sixth Corps, was designated to make the attack on Doles. General Russell now commanded the First Division. Colonel Upton's command was composed of his own brigade, the third brigade, formerly Russell's, and four regiments of Neill's brigade of the second division. General Russell, Colonel Upton, and all the regimental commanders examined the ground.

"In conjunction with Upton's attack, Mott early in the day moved to the open ground of the Brown house, which is three-quarters of a mile north of what I have called the apex of the salient; open ground connected Brown's farm with Landron's, on the south end of which lay the apex; but there was wood on each side of that open connecting space that came up to within four or five hundred yards of the apex. At 2 P.M., General Mott

¹ See the general map of the Confederate intrenchments, facing page 465.

was instructed by General Wright, under whose orders he had been placed, to be ready to assault the works in his front at five o'clock. These works, like those of Doles, had abattis and were well traversed and well supplied with artillery.

"Upton's column was formed in four lines. They were led quietly to near the edge of the wood, two hundred yards from the enemy. A heavy battery of the Sixth Corps had been put in position to give a direct fire on Doles' front and to enfilade the apex line of the salient, which, as before said, adjoined Doles' brigade.

"This battery kept up a constant fire until the moment of Upton's charge arrived. Its cessation was the signal to charge. The column had been led up silently to the edge of the wood, and, upon the signal being given, rushed forward with a hurrah under a terrible front and flank fire, gained the parapet, had a hand-to-hand desperate struggle, which lasted but a few seconds, and the column poured over the works, capturing a large number of prisoners. Pressing forward and extending right and left, the second line of entrenchments with its battery fell into Upton's hands. The enemy's line was completely broken and, Colonel Upton says, an opening made for the division, Mott's, which was to have supported the left, but it did not arrive. Colonel Upton says further, that reinforcements to the enemy arrived and assailed him in front and on both flanks, the impulse of the charge was over, and it remained for them to hold the entrenchments won, which they did until General Russell ordered them to withdraw, which they effected under the cover of darkness. Their loss in the assault Colonel Upton states to have been about 1,000 in killed, wounded, and missing. The enemy, he says, lost at least 100 killed at the first intrenchment, and met with

a much heavier loss in trying to regain their works ; that he captured between 1,000 and 1,200 prisoners, and several stand of colors."

Of the failure of Mott's division, General Humphreys thus writes : " There is no report on the files of the War Department from General Mott of his attack, nor is there any from General Wright of that or any other operation of that part of the campaign. The only report upon it that I found in the War Department is that of Colonel McAllister, who commanded the First Brigade of Mott's division ; Colonel William R. Brewster commanded the Second Brigade. The division consisted of two brigades. Colonel McAllister says that his brigade formed the first line, Colonel Campbell, with two regiments of the Sixth Corps, being on his right ; that the Second Brigade formed the second line, and that the command moved forward to the attack punctually at five o'clock ; but he must be mistaken in the hour, since it is evident that the attack of Mott was intended to be simultaneous with that of Upton, and must have been set in motion by the same signal, the cessation of our artillery fire in that quarter. On entering the fields, McAllister says, the enemy opened his batteries upon them, enfilading their lines, and the men fell back in confusion, except a small part of the front line, and that, after consulting with his colonels, he fell back to the foot of the hill, where he massed his command. He says nothing of General Mott, who was well known as a gallant officer. Colonel McAllister was also well known to myself and many others as a man of courage and coolness.

" Mott formed his division for attack in view of the enemy, who made every preparation to meet it. Upton's attack was concealed from their view and was a surprise, and the plan of assault, being well arranged and carried

out, was a success. The plan and manner of Mott's assault, on the contrary, did not admit of its being a surprise. The formation of his troops probably kept the attention of the enemy upon him, and in that way helped more effectually to conceal Upton's preparations. The failure of Mott's division did more than neutralize the success of Upton. Had Mott joined him, the two pressing forward, taking the enemy on the right and left in flank and rear, and receiving further reinforcements from the Sixth Corps as they progressed, the probabilities were that we should have gained possession of Lee's intrenchments."

Such, in its various phases and diverse fortunes, was the battle of the 10th of May. Unquestionably General Humphreys is right, in reviewing the situation of the morning, where he says: "It is to be regretted that Hancock had not been directed to cross the Po at daylight of the 10th, instead of being ordered to cross late in the afternoon of the 9th. Had he been, there appears to be every reason to conclude that the Confederate left would have been turned and taken in rear, while the Fifth Corps attacked it in front. As it was, Hancock's crossing in the evening of the 9th put Lee on his guard, and enabled him to bring troops to the threatened flank by daylight of the 10th, and throw up intrenchments. It was a mistake, too, as Hancock had crossed, to abandon the turning movement on the morning of the 10th, and make, instead of it, a front attack on the strong intrenchments of Longstreet's left. It would have been better to have continued the turning movement, the Fifth Corps aiding by sending one of its divisions to Hancock and making a front attack with the other two at the critical moment."

The assaults on the enemy's intrenchments in the cen-

tre had all been bloody and fruitless. Assuming the withdrawal of Hancock's corps across the Po to be necessary, the opportunity of the day was in the assault of Upton. Nothing that can be said of that heroic young officer, or of General David A. Russell, his division commander, could exaggerate the deserts of these two soldiers, the shining ornaments of the Sixth Corps. Whether it would not have been possible for that corps itself to furnish the support needed to turn this initial success into a great victory, I will not undertake to say. General Humphreys rightly says that General Mott was a gallant officer, and that Colonel McAllister was a man of coolness and courage; but certain it is that on the 10th of May, through whatever misunderstandings or misadventures, through whatever faults of officers or men, the Third Division failed to give to Upton a prompt and effective support.

But the support of Upton should not have been left to a single division. If the position he was ordered to attack was practicable, the assaulting columns should have been backed up by the divisions of the Sixth Corps, by Gibbon, and by the divisions of the Fifth Corps uselessly engaged in assaulting the centre. This the more needs to be said because the characteristic fault of the campaign then opened was attacking at too many points. Few lines can be drawn by engineering skill which, owing to the nature of the ground, have not a weak point; few will be drawn by good engineers which have more than one weak point. It is the office of the commander of the army to discover that weak point; to make careful and serious preparation for the attack, and to mass behind the assaulting column a force that shall be irresistible, if only once the line be pierced. It is gratifying to record that the splendid conduct of Colonel Upton re-

ceived cordial recognition ; and that he was at once promoted to be brigadier-general of volunteers.

The losses of the Second Corps, in killed and wounded during the 10th of May, are given approximately by General Humphreys as 2,050, or almost exactly those of the Fifth and Sixth Corps combined. The Confederate losses, in killed and wounded, are estimated by General Humphreys to have been only one-half those of the Union troops. The Confederate loss in prisoners was considerable, through Upton's captures. Among the commissioned officers killed or mortally wounded in the Second Corps were Captain O. F. Angell, and Lieutenant William H. Monk, Tenth New York ; Captain M. D. Purtell, Seventy-third New York ; Captain John Evans, Second Delaware ; Captains Samuel F. Stone, and John Finney and Lieutenant James Cherry, Eighty-sixth New York ; Captain Ira Munson, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York ; Lieutenant M. O. McGarry, Thirty-ninth New York, and Lieutenant Herman Von Haake, Fifty-second New York ; Lieutenants Edward Sturgis and L. E. Hibbard, Twentieth Massachusetts ; Lieutenant George B. Simonds, Fifteenth Massachusetts ; Lieutenant Henry O. Ripley, Fourth Maine ; Lieutenant Josiah W. Barker, One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania ; Lieutenant Charles Dussuet, Seventy-fourth New York ; Lieutenants James D. Simpson and Charles J. Steele, First Delaware.



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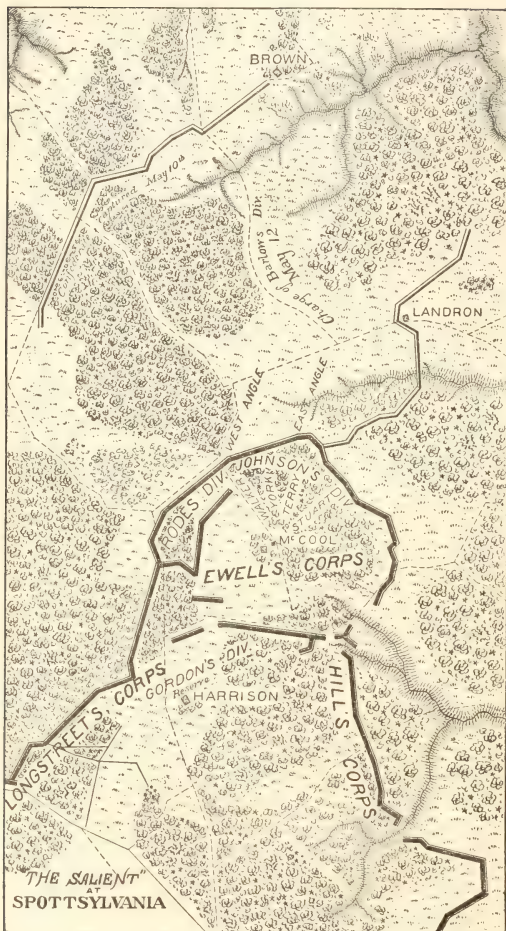
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CHAPTER XV.

THE 12TH OF MAY : THE SALIENT.

Nothing of importance occurred¹ on the 11th, except in preparation for the morrow, General Meade having decided to attack the enemy on the 12th near the point where Mott's division had made its ineffectual assault. The Confederate intrenchments had been extended to meet the successive threats of the Army of the Potomac until they measured several miles, having been stretched westward to cover the Shady Grove Road, down which Hancock had advanced on the evening of the 9th ; and southward below Spottsylvania Court House. Our map, opposite this page, does not attempt to follow all the sinuosities due to the nature of the ground, but shows, in a general way, the Confederate line as it existed on the evening of the 11th of May. It will be seen that that line consisted of two faces : one (the Confederate left) looking mainly north, held by Longstreet's corps ; the other (the Confederate right) looking mainly east, held by Hill's corps ; but that, at the point where these faces would have met, in an angle at the northeast, the intrenchments were carried northward to enclose a space approximately a mile in vertical direction and half a mile in width, of the general shape of an acorn.

¹ Miles' brigade was sent on a reconnoissance as far as Todd's Tavern, but did not encounter the enemy : two regiments were also thrown across the Po, to feel the enemy in that direction.



The "salient," or obtrusive portion of the Confederate line, the faces of which, taken together, covered perhaps two and a quarter miles in length, was occupied mainly by Ewell's corps.

It was against this portion of the Confederate works that General Meade designed to deliver the assault of May 12th.

It will be observed that Longstreet's corps held the left of the portion of the Confederate line here represented, extending from the Brock Road northeast; then came Rodes' division of Ewell's corps; then Johnson's division of the same corps, Johnson's four brigades (showing faintly through the woods, on the map) being, in order from left to right, as follows: Walker, York, Terry, Stuart. The line was then taken up by Hill's corps, which stretched away to the south.

General Grant's order, directing the assault at four o'clock on the morning of the 12th, and assigning three divisions of the Second Corps to the work, bears date 3 P.M. Gibbon's division was in a position where it could not be moved without attracting the enemy's attention. It was, however, to be brought up later. General Meade's order to General Hancock bears date four o'clock.

The oral instructions accompanying contemplated a thorough survey of the ground by Colonel Comstock, United States Engineers, of General Grant's staff, and by officers of General Hancock's staff. The Inspector-General of the corps and two other officers were, accordingly, assigned to this duty. It was also assumed that General Mott, having attacked, with his division, near the designated spot on the 10th, and being then in position near it, at the Brown House, would be in possession of valuable information regarding the enemy's works.

General Morgan thus recounts the experience of the staff on this reconnoissance :

“Colonel Comstock, of General Grant's staff, taking with him three of General Hancock's staff, set out, in the midst of a pouring rain, to reconnoitre and decide upon the exact point of attack. Unfortunately the Colonel missed his way, and after riding many miles the party struck the Ninth Corps. Colonel Comstock took a survey of the angle from the hill opposite the Landron House; but made no remark to indicate that it was to be the point of attack. Owing to the time spent upon the road it was nearly dark before the party arrived at the Brown House, the point indicated by General Meade.

“Here General Mott was found; but could tell little about the ground. An attempt to drive in the enemy's pickets that day, for the purpose of gaining some information, had failed; and nothing remained but to add to the little learned from General Mott and the field-officer of the day, by inspecting so much of the ground as was held by our pickets. It was only possible, before dark, to select the line for the formation of the corps.”

General Morgan thus describes the incidents of the march of Birney's and Barlow's divisions, and the formation of the column of assault :

“At 10 P.M. the troops were put in motion, Major Mendell of the Engineers guiding the column. The night was pitch dark, and the road quite bad; but the march to Mott's position was made without any incident of note. The troops showed a little nervousness perhaps. At one point where the command was closing up on the head of the column, a runaway pack-mule, laden with rattling kettles and pans, bursting suddenly through the ranks, seemed to threaten a general stampede. At another the accidental discharge of a musket startled the

column into the momentary belief that the corps had run into the enemy's lines. Having arrived at the Brown House about midnight, the column was passed quietly over the intrenchments, and as near to the picket line of the enemy as possible, and the formation of the lines began. The ground was thickly wooded, with the exception of a clearing some four hundred yards wide, running to the Landron House, thence curving to the right toward the salient of the enemy's works. Barlow's division was formed across this clearing in two lines of masses, each regiment being doubled on the centre. Brooke's and Miles' brigades constituted the first line, and Smyth and Brown the second. Birney formed on Barlow's right, in two deployed lines. Mott formed in rear of Birney, and Gibbon's division, which had joined sooner than was expected, was placed in reserve. It was nearly daylight when these preparations were made. General Barlow made anxious inquiries about the nature of the ground over which he was to move, and not getting any satisfactory information desired, at length, to be told whether there was a ravine a thousand feet deep between him and the enemy. When he could not be assured even on this point, he seemed to think that he was called upon to lead a forlorn hope, and placed his valuables in the hands of a friend."

The requisite preparations had been completed by the time assigned for the assault ; but, owing to a heavy fog which spread over the scene, it was not sufficiently light to enable objects to be clearly discerned until half-past four, when the order to charge was given. Birney met some difficult ground in his advance ; and for a few moments Barlow's line, steadily moving forward in the dead silence, was ahead ; but Birney's men made super-human exertions, and pushing through the obstacles

again came up abreast of the First Division. Near the Landron House the enemy's picket reserves opened fire on the left flank of Barlow's column, which was swiftly passing them, mortally wounding Lieutenant-Colonel Stricker, Second Delaware. As soon as the curve in the clearing allowed Barlow's men to see the red earth at the salient, they broke into a wild cheer, and taking the double-quick without orders, rushed up against the works. Tearing away the abattis with their hands, Miles' and Brooke's brigades sprang over the intrenchments, bayoneting the defenders or beating them down with clubbed muskets. Almost at the same instant Birney entered the works on his side, and the salient was won! Nearly a mile of the Confederate line was in our hands. Four thousand prisoners—including Major-General Edward Johnson and Brigadier-General George H. Stuart—upward of thirty colors, and eighteen cannon, were the fruits of the victory. Crazed with excitement Birney's and Barlow's men could not be restrained, but followed the flying enemy until their second line of works, half a mile in the rear, was reached. Here the disorganized masses were brought to a stand by the resolute front presented by the Confederate reserves, true to those traditions which made the men of that army even more dangerous in defeat than in victory.

Thus far the attack had been a magnificent success, even though Burnside, attacking upon his side, had, after lodging the head of column of Potter's division inside the enemy's works, been driven out with loss. But now the moment of failure of connection, of delay in bringing up reserves, of misunderstanding and misadventure, inevitable in large military operations in such a country, had come. Everything that Hancock and his subordinate commanders could do to prepare for a new advance was

done ; the reserve divisions were ordered to man the captured works ; and the leading brigades, broken by the fury of the assault, were got together as well as possible under the furious fire now poured in from the second Confederate line. The Sixth Corps coming up took post on the right of the Second, occupying the line from the west angle southward ; Mott joined the Sixth Corps at that angle ; Birney came next on the left ; then Gibbon ; then Barlow. All these at once set to work to "turn" the captured intrenchments, for use against those who had constructed them. There was not a moment to spare, for into that bloody space were now advancing thousands of stout soldiers, desperately determined to retrieve the fortunes of the day that had set so strongly against the Confederacy, and even promised to result in the disruption and destruction of Lee's army. On the Union side the confusion had become extreme ; the long lines formed for the assault had insensibly converged as the salient was reached, and were heaped one upon another. Carroll's and Owen's brigades, of Gibbon's division which was formed in reserve, had been caught by the wild excitement of the charge, and dashing to the front struggled even past some of the leading troops, and entered the Confederate works, on Stuart's line, almost at the same moment with the brigades of Miles and Brooke. McAllister's brigade of Mott's division also pushed forward from the second line, and threw itself over the enemy's works almost simultaneously with Birney's division of the first line. This enthusiasm of the charging column was in itself very commendable ; but, taken in connection with the originally dense formation, it had led to an unnecessary and dangerous massing of the troops. Such a body was, for the purpose of the impending collision, scarcely so formidable as would have been a single well-ordered line.

On the Confederate side, Gordon's division was, at the time the storm burst, theoretically in reserve; but he had, in fact, sent one of his brigades—Pegram's—into the trenches near Johnson's left; of the other two, Evans' was in front of the McCool House; Johnston's near Harrison's House. On hearing the firing at the east angle of the salient, he had sent forward Johnston, who, encountering Barlow's right and Birney's left, as they were pressing forward from the intrenchments, was broken and driven back, Johnston being wounded. Withdrawing Pegram's and Evans' brigades at the double-quick, Gordon formed them near Harrison's House and advanced them with great vigor against the left of Hancock's column, driving the disordered assailants some distance back toward the east angle, and momentarily recovering some of the lost guns. At the same time General Rodes sent the brigades of Daniel and Ramseur against the troops of Birney and Mott, which were moving tumultuously down the west face of the salient. Daniel was killed and Ramseur severely wounded; but soon, re-enforced by Perrin's and Harris' brigades, from Mahone, and still later by McGowan's brigade, from Wilcox, the Confederates regained some part of the captured intrenchments. In these successive encounters all the troops which had crossed over the breastworks into the space enclosed by the salient had been driven out, and the Second Corps now held only their own, that is, the outer, side of the intrenchments they had captured in the assault. It was about this time that General Wright arrived with Wheaton's and Russell's divisions of the Sixth Corps, and took post on Hancock's right, that is, on the west face of the salient. The conflict had now become the closest and fiercest of the war. The Confederates were determined to recover their intrenchments

at whatever cost. For the distance of nearly a mile, amid a cold, drenching rain, the combatants were literally struggling across the breastworks. They fired directly into each other's faces, bayonet thrusts were given over the intrenchments; men even grappled their antagonists across the piles of logs and pulled them over, to be stabbed or carried to the rear as prisoners. General Hancock had, as soon as the first success was achieved, brought up some of his guns to within three hundred yards of the captured works, and these were now pouring solid shot and shell, over the heads of our troops, into the space crowded with the Confederate brigades; he even ran a section of Brown's Rhode Island, and a section of Gillis' Fifth United States, up to the breastworks; and though the muzzles protruded into the very faces of the charging Confederates, the begrimed cannoners for a time continued to pour canister into the woods, and over the open ground on the west of the McCool House.

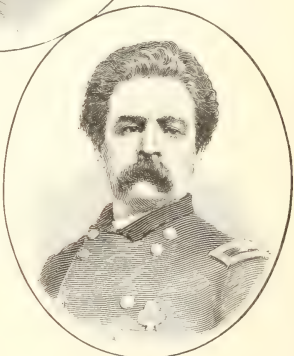
The contest had settled down to a struggle for the recovery of the apex of the salient between the east and the west angle. No effort was made by the enemy to "counter" upon Hancock, by emerging from their works on either side.

On our part the battle assumed a less tumultuous character. The brigades that had suffered most severely, or had exhausted their ammunition, were relieved by others, and drawn to the rear to be reformed and to replenish their cartridge-boxes, against the time they should be sent forward to take their places along the blazing line. Never before, since the discovery of gunpowder, had such a mass of lead been hurled into a space so narrow as that which now embraced the scene of combat. Large standing trees were literally cut off and brought to the ground

by infantry fire alone ;¹ their great limbs whipped into basket stuff that could be woven by the hand of a girl. On either side, a long, ghastly procession of the wounded went limping or crawling to the rear ; on either side fast rose the mounds of the dead, intermingled with those who were too severely hurt to extricate themselves from their hideous environment.

If any comparisons can be made between the sections involved in that desperate contest, the fiercest and deadliest fighting took place at the west angle, ever afterward known as "The Bloody Angle." Here Wright's Sixth Corps had taken post on coming up at six o'clock. So furious were the enemy's charges at this point that Wright, with his two fresh divisions, was fain soon to call for re-enforcements ; and Brooke's brigade, which had been in the front line of the great charge, was sent over. Nine o'clock came—ten and eleven—and yet the fighting did not die down. At the latter hour General Hancock received the following despatch from Meade to Grant, sent him for his information : "Warren seems reluctant to assault. I have ordered him at all hazards to do so, and if his attack should be repulsed, to draw in his right and send his troops as fast as possible to Hancock and Wright. Tell Hancock to hold on." And Hancock held on, with his men four ranks deep, keeping their furious assailants at bay across the captured intrenchments. Warren's attack failed, with heavy loss, as that judicious officer had anticipated ; and in the afternoon Cutler's division of the Fifth Corps marched upon the

¹ The Confederate General McGowan states that an oak-tree, twenty-two inches in diameter, in rear of his brigade, was cut down by musket-balls. There is in Washington a tree eight to ten inches in diameter, which was so cut down on the line of Miles' brigade.



BREVET MAJ.-GEN. S. S. CARROLL

BREVET BRIG.-GEN. JAMES A. BEAVER

MAJ.-GEN. FRANCIS C. BARLOW

BREVET MAJ.-GEN. ALEX. HAYS

BREVET MAJ.-GEN. THOMAS A. SMYTH

field at the Landron House, where the contest was still raging with unabated fury along the salient. All day the bloody work went on, and still the men of the North and of the South, now wrought to an inexpressible rage, were not gorged with slaughter. The trenches had more than once to be cleared of the dead, to give the living a place to stand. All day long, and even into the night the battle lasted, for it was not till twelve o'clock, nearly twenty hours after the command "Forward" had been given to the column at the Brown House, that the firing died down, and the Confederates, relinquishing their purpose to retake the captured works, began in the darkness to construct a new line to cut off the salient.

So ended this bloody day; and those that slept after its tremendous labors and its fierce excitements had in them, for the time, hardly more of life than the corpses that lay around on every side. The chilling rain still fell upon that ghastly field; fell alike on the living and the dead, on friend and foeman; on those who might wake to battle in the morning, and on those who should never wake again.

It is not possible accurately to distinguish between the losses of the 12th of May and those of the days preceding and following. Surgeon McParlin, in charge of the hospital service of the Army of the Potomac, reported the wounded of the several corps on the 12th as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| The Second Corps..... | 2,043 |
| " Fifth " | 970 |
| " Sixth " | 840 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 3,853 |

Making allowance for the killed, General Humphreys estimates the total killed and wounded at four thousand seven hundred and thirty-three; the missing as not in excess of five hundred. Burnside's corps, the Ninth,

which was not at this date counted as of the Army of the Potomac, is supposed to have lost about one thousand two hundred and fifty killed or wounded, and three hundred prisoners captured in two counter-charges made by the enemy, making Grant's total loss approximately six thousand eight hundred. General Humphreys estimates General Lee's losses, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, at between nine thousand and ten thousand men, making a hideous gap in his army. The losses of general officers on that side had been excessive, owing to the ferocity of the contest around the salient. Generals Daniel and Perrin had been killed; Generals Walker, Ramseur, Johnston, and McGowan wounded, all severely; and Generals Johnson and Stuart captured.

On our side the loss in general officers had not been heavy, though rarely were commanders so continuously exposed. General Wright, commanding the Sixth Corps, was struck by a piece of shell which threw him backward several feet; but, though greatly shaken, insisted on remaining at the front to the close. General Alexander S. Webb, while leading his brigade into action at the east angle, with his customary gallantry, received a ghastly wound in the head, which long disabled him. The officer of highest rank in the Second Corps who was killed in this desperate struggle was Colonel John Coons, Fourteenth Indiana, who fell dead while giving to his men an example of heroic courage, sitting calmly on his horse in the trenches, and firing barrel after barrel of his revolver at the Confederates, who were swarming up on the other side of the breastworks. Colonel Coons had long proved himself a cool, capable, devoted officer, worthy of the regiment he led. Another officer who fell, deeply lamented, was Lieutenant-Colonel Waldo Merriam, of the Sixteenth Massachusetts, an accomplished

and graceful gentleman, a brave and intelligent soldier. As field-officer of the day of Birney's division he had rendered valuable service in forming the corps for the assault and in directing the movement of the column. The death of Lieutenant-Colonel David L. Stricker, from the fire of the Confederate picket reserves at the Landron House, has already been mentioned. Three other officers of the same rank, all of excellent standing in the corps, fell during the action: Lieutenant-Colonels Thomas H. Davis, Twelfth New Jersey; Richard C. Dale, One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania, and William L. Curry, One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania. The other officers killed or mortally wounded were Captain Thomas W. Eayre, Assistant Adjutant-General, on the staff of General Mott; Captains Lafayette Gordon and John F. Thomas, and Lieutenant John C. Bartholomew, Twentieth Indiana; Captain Moses H. Warren, First Massachusetts; Captain Thomas Kelly and Lieutenant Josiah Jack, Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania; Captain Mitchell Smith, Seventy-first Pennsylvania; Captains P. H. Lennon, Joseph W. Tobin, and William O'Shea, and Lieutenant John Coffey, Forty-second New York; Captain R. A. Kelly, Sixty-ninth New York; Captain William J. Evans, Seventh New Jersey; Captain Charles W. Devereaux, and Lieutenants Elias Brockway and Edwin W. Sampson, One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania; Captain John Phelan, and Lieutenant Benedict A. Leonard, Seventy-third New York; Captain Edward P. Jones, and Lieutenants C. E. Cleminshaw, and E. S. P. Clapp, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York; Captain Henry B. Owen, and Lieutenant George A. Sherman, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York; Captain Samuel T. Sleeper, and Lieutenants William H. Egan and

J. C. Baldwin, Eleventh New Jersey ; Captain George H. Hutt, and Lieutenant John M. Ottinger, One Hundred and Eighty-third Pennsylvania ; Captain Louis F. Waters, and Lieutenant Henry S. Zeisert, Ninety-ninth Pennsylvania ; Lieutenant Thomas J. O'Keefe, Thirty-ninth New York ; Captains Walter Von Amo, William Scherrer, and Lieutenants Eugene Walsh, Robert Karples, and Otto Von Steuben, Fifty-second New York ; Captain George A. Nye, Third Maine ; Captain John S. Simons, Fourteenth Indiana ; Captain John J. Blake, Sixty-ninth New York ; Lieutenant Eugene M. Wright, Fifty-ninth New York ; Lieutenant Sidney N. Hawk, Eighty-first Pennsylvania ; Lieutenant James M. Smart, Sixty-third New York ; Lieutenants David T. Wiggins, George R. Fisk, Pulaski V. Alton, Sixty-fourth New York ; Captain Thompson Core, and Lieutenants James B. Cook, Wesley W. Bearley and John A. McGuire One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania ; Lieutenant John J. Ferris, Nineteenth Massachusetts ; Lieutenant Thomas P. Morris, Twenty-sixth Pennsylvania ; Lieutenant Jeremiah C. Greene, Fifty-seventh Pennsylvania ; Lieutenants Charles S. Schwartz and Joshua A. Gage, One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania ; Lieutenant John W. Manning, One Hundred and Tenth Pennsylvania ; Lieutenant Charles Manahan, Eighth Ohio ; Lieutenant Abner M. Johnson, Seventh Virginia ; Lieutenant Thomas Johnston, Sixty-sixth New York. On the corps staff, Major H. H. Bingham, Judge-Advocate, an officer rarely equalled in courage, energy, and intelligence, since distinguished in the National Congress, was severely wounded.

Few officers or men of the corps were captured, even in the fierce encounters within the salient ; but among these few was one whose loss was greatly felt, namely, Colonel Brown, One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsyl-

vania, commanding brigade, whose impetuosity led him so far, in attacking Gordon's reserve line, as to render it impossible for him to extricate himself from the mass of Confederates surrounding him.

Among the changes in the *personnel* of the corps, incident to the action we have recorded, were the promotions of Colonels Miles, Brooke, and Carroll, to be Brigadier-Generals of Volunteers. Three finer examples of fiery valor in battle, of the steady and faithful performance of duty, even to the dreariest work of routine in camp and on the march, could not have been found in one group in all the armies of the United States. Of these General Carroll, by the reckless exposure of his person in action, and the delight he found in defying danger, was apt to give to on-lookers the impression that he was a mere madcap. Like General Alexander Hays, however, this genius of the skirmish line had a comprehensive glance over the field, a thoroughly sound judgment, and a firm and steady temper. Generals Miles and Brooke had been conspicuous on every battle-field since Sunday morning at Fair Oaks, not more for their indomitable valor than for their command over men; their calm intelligence, over which the smoke of battle never cast a cloud; their resistless energy in assault; their ready wit and abounding resources amid disaster.

The division commanders of the corps, and the brigade commanders, with a single exception,¹ won new honors at the bloody salient. Among regimental commanders Colonel William Blaisdell, of the Eleventh Massachusetts, deserves especial mention for unflinching determination in holding his line against the most desperate assaults.

¹ Brigadier-General Joshua T. Owen was placed in arrest by General Gibbon. He was subsequently mustered out, under charges of misconduct.

CHAPTER XVI.

SPOTTSYLVANIA, MAY 13TH TO 19TH.

WHEN day broke on the morning of the 13th of May it was found that the Confederates had retired from the salient and had constructed intrenchments cutting off entirely this portion of their former line. In order fully to develop the enemy's new position, General Gibbon was instructed to send forward a brigade, and for this purpose selected that of Owen; but the commander being in arrest, he looked around for General Carroll to ask him to take the command, having reference to that officer's unequalled ability alike in skirmishing tactics and downright hard fighting. At the moment Gibbon met Carroll the latter was riding from the field to go to the hospital, the wound which he had received in the Wilderness having become aggravated by the labors and exposures of the subsequent days. Informed of his division commander's wish, Carroll, too high-spirited to confess his pain and weakness, at once put his horse about and placed himself at the head of his new brigade. The work assigned was well performed, after a sharp and close encounter. A break occurring in the lines in immediate contact with the enemy, Carroll, after his fashion, threw himself into the breach and was shot by a Confederate soldier, a few feet away, who took aim at him with sufficient deliberation to give Carroll time to wonder inwardly where he should be hit. The ball took effect in Carroll's

left arm, knocking his elbow all to pieces ; and this bravest of brave men was forced to withdraw from what proved to be his last battle-field, though he recovered from his severe wound sufficiently to take the field in 1865 at the head of a division of the First Veteran Corps.

After this encounter little occurred during the day except that General Miles succeeded, after a brisk skirmish, in getting out two guns, which had been left between the lines on the 12th, thus swelling the captures to twenty pieces.

The heavy losses sustained by Mott's Fourth Division during the campaign, together with the expiration of the terms of enlistment of several regiments therein, rendered necessary a discontinuance of that division, its two brigades, one of which General Mott was assigned to command, being attached to the Third Division, General Birney. The Third Division thus came to have four brigades.

During the night of the 13th General Meade undertook a movement, by his left, with a view to attacking Lee's right flank on the Fredericksburg Road, it being known that the fighting of the 12th had drawn the Confederate forces largely toward the scene of that battle. General Warren, abandoning his own intrenchments, was to take the lead in this movement, and to be supported by the Sixth Corps. The route led mainly "across country," through fields and woods, first crossing and then re-crossing the Ny River. The Sixth Corps was to follow the Fifth, form on its left, and attack on the Massaponax Road. The darkness of the night, the rain and heavy mist, and the hideous condition of the ground caused so much delay and confusion that neither the Fifth nor the Sixth Corps got into position in time for the contemplated assault on the morning of the 14th.

A reconnoissance, out the Massaponax Church Road, by Confederate cavalry, in the afternoon, revealed the presence of our people and caused Lee at once to despatch troops to meet the threatened attack. "Fortune," says General Humphreys, "evidently did not favor us on the night of the 13th, for the intrenchments on the Confederate right did not extend much south of the Court House, and only Hill's corps was on that front. With ordinary weather¹ the Fifth and Sixth Corps would have been able to attack there early in the morning, before reinforcements could have been brought from the Confederate left."

The movement of the Fifth and Sixth Corps to the left necessitated fresh dispositions on the right; and in the early morning of the 15th, General Hancock moved Barlow's and Gibbon's divisions to the Spottsylvania and Fredericksburg Road, in the vicinity of the Ny River, leaving Birney to cover the right flank of the Ninth Corps, which remained essentially in its position of the 12th. The picket line was left to be withdrawn by Birney when night should come. During the day the enemy administered a vigorous shelling to Birney.

Affairs remained unchanged on the 16th, except that

¹ "The night set in dark and rainy. Every precaution was taken by General Warren to mark out the line of his march. Men were posted at short intervals, and fires built along the line; but the rain and heavy mist obscured and extinguished them. The mud was deep over a large part of the route; the darkness intense, so that literally you could not see your hand held before your face. The march was necessarily very slow; the fatigue of floundering along in such a sea of mud but few can apprehend. In spite of all the care taken to prevent it, men lost their way and lay down exhausted, until daylight enabled them to go on."—Humphreys' Campaign of 1864 and 1865.

Gibbon's division was sent to move the wounded and the hospitals of the Second and Sixth Corps, which was accomplished by 10 P.M. On this day Brigadier-General R. O. Tyler's division of heavy artillery, from the defences of Washington, and the Corcoran (Irish) Legion were assigned to the Second Corps. The heavy artillery comprised the First Massachusetts Heavy Artillery, Colonel Thomas R. Tannatt; the First Maine Heavy Artillery, Colonel Daniel Chaplin, and the following New York regiments: the Second, Colonel J. N. G. Whistler; the Seventh, Colonel Lewis O. Morris; and the Eighth, Colonel Peter A. Porter. The Corcoran Legion comprised the following infantry regiments from New York: the One Hundred and Fifty-fifth, Lieutenant-Colonel Hugh C. Flood; the One Hundred and Sixty-fourth, Colonel James P. McMahon; and the One Hundred and Seventieth, Colonel James P. McIvor, and the Sixty-ninth New York State Militia, Colonel Mathew Murphy. The last-named regiment subsequently known as the One Hundred and Eighty-second New York Volunteers is to be distinguished from the Sixty-ninth New York, which had served in the Second Corps from its organization. These reinforcements comprised about eight thousand men, enough to make good, numerically, the losses of the corps in the campaign thus far. The material of the new coming regiments, and particularly of the heavy artillery, could not have been surpassed. During the years of greatest discouragement at the North, these regiments, destined as it was supposed for garrison duty, had "the pick" of all the volunteers; and finer bodies of men, in line of battle, it would be difficult to find.

Yet all this could not make good the losses which the corps had sustained in the first fortnight of the campaign.

Those who had fallen were men inured to camp life, to hardship, exposure, and fatigue; in bivouac they knew how to make themselves almost comfortable with the narrowest means; how to cover themselves in rain and storm; how to make fires out of green wood, find water in dry ground, and cook their rations to the best advantage. On the march they had learned to cover the greatest distance with the least wear and tear; on picket and skirmish they had learned a score of tricks by which they at once protected themselves and became more formidable to the enemy. In battle, officers and men had become veterans through a score of fierce encounters; no form of danger could be a surprise to them. With a high price bought they this knowledge! Thousands had died that these regiments might know how to advance and how to retire as occasion should demand; how to cover themselves most completely through long hours of waiting and how to throw themselves, body and soul, into one tremendous blow, on the vital spot, at the critical instant. Of the troops named, the Corcoran Legion was assigned to Gibbon's division. The heavy artillery remained, for the time, unattached.

THE 18TH OF MAY.

During the 17th preparations were made, in accordance with orders received from army headquarters, to attack the enemy at four o'clock on the morning of the 18th. The point designated was the vicinity of the Landron House. That is, the enemy having been drawn off to their right by the movement of the Fifth and Sixth Corps, on the 13th and 14th, it was proposed that the Second and Sixth Corps should suddenly return to a point opposite the Confederate left, in the hope of find-

ing their lines there weak. In carrying out this plan, the Second Corps, starting from the works gained by it on the 12th, was to advance inward through the salient, and attack the intrenchments built by the enemy to cut off that portion of their line. At the same time, the Sixth Corps should advance upon the right of the Second, and Burnside on the left, Warren opening with his artillery and holding his troops in readiness to take any advantage that might offer on his front. During the night the divisions of Barlow and Gibbon were moved to the Landron House, Birney being already in position. The heavy artillery was formed between the Brown and the Landron houses. Barlow and Gibbon were in line of brigades. On moving forward, at daybreak, the enemy were found strongly posted in rifle-pits, their front completely covered by heavy slashing, while a powerful artillery opened promptly upon the column. The assaulting brigades could not penetrate the dense slashing, in the face of the musketry and artillery fire they encountered, although very gallant efforts were made, the troops behaving with steadiness, scarcely a man going unwounded to the rear. The Corcoran Legion showed itself every way worthy of the company it had come to keep. Gibbon for a time succeeded in getting possession of an advanced line of rifle-pits, but was unable to hold it long. Becoming satisfied that persistence was useless, General Hancock advised a discontinuance of the assault, and General Meade thereupon instructed him to withdraw his troops. Inasmuch as General Humphreys speaks of the wounded of the 18th of May as "almost entirely of the Second Corps," we may suppose that neither Wright nor Burnside did much more than was necessary to disclose the enemy's real line and ascertain that it was of a formidable character. Burnside's attack

had been equally ineffectual. "In ordering this assault," remarks General Morgan, "it was perhaps supposed that the corps would be urged to greater efforts to repeat its previous achievements on the same ground; but such was not the fact. Large numbers of the dead were still unburied, and having been exposed to the hot sun for nearly a week presented a hideous sight. Such a stench came up from the field as to make many of the officers and men deathly sick. All the circumstances were such as to dishearten the men rather than to encourage them."

The killed and wounded, of the 18th, in the Second Corps, were about six hundred and fifty, in the two divisions engaged. The officers killed or mortally wounded in this brief and partial engagement were Major Andrew J. Lawler, and Captains James Magner and William F. Cochrane, Twenty-eighth Massachusetts; Captain John J. Stickney, Fifty-third Pennsylvania; Lieutenant John S. Fitzmaurice, One Hundred and Seventieth New York; Lieutenants Charles Watters and James A. O'Sullivan, One Hundred and Sixty-fourth New York; Lieutenant Richard P. King, Sixty-ninth New York; Lieutenant William H. Ferguson, First Delaware.

19TH OF MAY—"THE HEAVIES."

During the night of the 18th the main body of the Second Corps lay on the Fredericksburg road, near Anderson's Mill, on the east side of the Ny River, Barlow remaining at the Landron House, till eight o'clock in the morning, to cover Burnside's flank. The corps had hardly settled into its bivouacs when the following order was received:

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,

May 19, 1864, 1.30 P.M.

MAJOR-GENERAL HANCOCK,

Commanding Second Corps.

The Major-General commanding directs that you move with your corps to-morrow, at 2 A.M., to Bowling Green and Milford Station, *via* Guinea Station, and take position on the right bank of the Mattapony, if practicable. Should you encounter the enemy, you will attack him vigorously, and report immediately to these headquarters, which you will keep advised of your progress, from time to time. Brigadier-General Torbert, with a cavalry force and a battery of horse artillery, is ordered to report to you for duty. An engineer officer and guide will be sent to you. Canvas pontoons will likewise be put at your disposal.

A. A. HUMPHREYS,

Major-General, Chief of Staff.

On this order General Morgan remarks, "There is an old adage that it is the willing horse that is worked to death;" and he breaks out into a somewhat indignant recital of the marches and battles of the Second Corps from the 3d to the 18th of May, closing with, "and now, on the third consecutive night, it was proposed to send it on a flank march, over twenty miles, to 'attack vigorously' in the morning."

Providence and the Confederates interfered to prevent the movement across the Mattapony which had been ordered. On the afternoon of the 19th, Ewell sought to steal around Meade's right, his primary object being to ascertain whether we were really moving or not; the secondary, to do as much mischief as possible. Leaving his intrenchments in charge of Kershaw, the successor of Jackson made a wide detour around the right of our army, and then, sharply turning, bore down at about five o'clock in the afternoon upon the Freder-

icksburg road, which was, at this time, our line of supply. General Ewell had doubtless expected to find, so far to the rear, a small force or none; but, as it proved, Kitching's brigade and Tyler's division of Heavy Artillery were in position to receive him. Kitching was promptly re-enforced by the Maryland brigade of infantry, from the Fifth Corps. Hancock, galloping to the front, sent word to Birney to come forward with his division at the double-quick. The "Heavies" were found fiercely engaged in their first battle against some of the most redoubtable troops of the Confederate army. Hancock at once took command of the line. Birney, on arriving, threw in two of his brigades, but the stress of the battle was by this time over. On finding so powerful a body in position to meet them, Ewell's leading troops recoiled, broken, from the encounter; their reserves were brought up, but the whole line being hard pressed in front, and overlapped on the left, gave way and retreated, though without great disorder, across the Ny. Ewell concedes a loss of nine hundred in killed, wounded, and missing in this enterprise. The Heavy Artillery regiments had borne themselves handsomely; they received without panic a sudden attack, which was intended to be another Chancellorsville surprise; faced the dread music of battle for the first time without flinching; and in the end beat off Rodes' and Gordon's divisions, with some assistance from the infantry coming up in their rear. Tyler's division took about four hundred prisoners. Among the officers killed or mortally wounded were Major Frank A. Rolfe, Captains W. G. Thompson and Albert A. Davis, and Lieutenants Edward Graham and Charles Carroll, First Massachusetts Heavy Artillery; Captains Robert H. Bell, John A. Morris, and Charles McCulloch, of the Seventh New York Heavy

Artillery; Captains William T. Parker and William R. Pattengall, and Lieutenants John F. Knowles, Gershom C. Bibber, W. A. Vickery, and George W. Grant, First Maine Heavy Artillery; Lieutenant Michael J. Lee, Fourth New York Heavy Artillery; Lieutenant Francis Knemm, Second New York Heavy Artillery.

The losses of the day in the entire army had been about thirteen hundred, "chiefly," says Humphreys, "in the Second Corps," that is, in Tyler's division of Heavy Artillery and in Birney's division. The entire losses of the Army of the Potomac and of Burnside's corps during the several actions around Spottsylvania Court House, from May 8th to 19th, inclusive, are estimated by General Humphreys as follows :

| | |
|-------------------------|--------|
| Killed | 2,447 |
| Wounded | 10,821 |
| Killed and wounded..... | 13,268 |
| Missing | 1,411 |
| Total losses | 14,679 |

The losses of the Second Corps had been as follows :

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| Killed..... | 834 |
| Wounded | 3,958 |
| Missing | 665 |
| Total..... | 5,457 |

This loss was distributed among the several commands as follows :

| | Killed. | Wounded. | Missing. | Total. |
|-------------------------|---------|----------|----------|--------|
| Corps Headquarters... | ... | 2 | ... | 2 |
| Artillery Brigade | 14 | 33 | 3 | 50 |
| First Division | 406 | 1,803 | 380 | 2,589 |
| Second Division..... | 153 | 769 | 102 | 1,029 |
| Third Division | 256 | 1,351 | 180 | 1,787 |

The loss was thus divided between enlisted men and commissioned officers :

| | Killed. | Wounded. | Missing. | Total. |
|-------------------------|---------|----------|----------|--------|
| Commissioned officers . | 72 | 207 | 19 | 298 |
| Enlisted men | 762 | 3,751 | 646 | 5,159 |

It will be observed that of the killed 8.6 per cent. were commissioned officers ; of the wounded but 5.2 per cent. ; of the missing, less than three per cent.

CHAPTER XVII.

NORTH ANNA AND THE TOTOPOTOMOY.

WE have seen that the Second Corps had been ordered to move at 2 A.M. of the 20th, directed on the Mattapony River. Ewell's irruption into our rear, combined with General Hancock's wish to undertake the march at an earlier hour, led to a suspension of the movement until 11 P.M. of the 20th.

At break of day on the 21st, the head of the column had reached Guinea Station, from which place Torbert's cavalry drove the enemy's videttes. The movement was therefore no longer to be concealed. Pushing on, the troops reached Bowling Green at ten o'clock. At Milford Station, just beyond, Torbert found the enemy, on the north side of the Mattapony, in rifle-pits, and by a vigorous dash dislodged this force—a portion of Kemper's old brigade of infantry—capturing about sixty prisoners and saving the bridge from serious injury.

Barlow's division crossed as soon as it came up. Gibbon followed, forming on Barlow's left, on the high land about a mile from the river. Tyler's division of Heavy Artillery held the left of the line, Birney remaining in reserve. The cavalry were pushed well to the front, to give timely notice of the arrival of the enemy, and the necessary preparations were made to attack vigorously in such a case.

The reader should understand that it was General

Meade's hope that the enemy would attack Hancock in this position, or, better still, that Hancock would take the aggressive against the enemy, advancing to attack him, and that thus a fight in the open would be brought on between considerable bodies of the two armies. Considering, however, that he was alone, on the extreme left flank of the army, across an important stream, and not knowing but that some accidental or treacherous discovery of Meade's plans might bring down upon him the whole weight of Lee's army, General Hancock set his troops to intrenching. The line thrown up in a few hours was a marvel for the skill and industry it displayed. The writer well remembers the astonishment of General Burnside, when he arrived, at the massive character of the works. He could scarcely believe that these had not required days for their construction; and after exhausting his powers of expression, would, with a brief rest, break forth again in the same vein.

The troops, worn by the long march and the subsequent labor, were still further harassed at night by a groundless alarm on the part of some of the new regiments. Fortunately the next day was one of complete rest, the time being required to bring up the remaining corps of the army. General Lee, on his part, had begun to change the positions of his troops early on the 21st; and was now in full movement, not to attack Hancock, as it had been hoped he would do, but to get again between Meade's army and Richmond. He was meanwhile being re-enforced, after his severe losses, by all the troops which could be brought in from the Valley of Virginia, from the James, and from North Carolina, to meet the next advance of the undaunted Army of the Potomac. These re-enforcements did not equal in numbers those reaching Meade from Washington; but consisted entirely

of veteran regiments, the Confederate authorities having early adopted the policy of filling up their original organizations, instead of creating new ones. On his part Grant was preparing to draw to his own support a portion of Butler's Army of the James, which, after its repulse by Beauregard, was "bottled up" in Bermuda Hundred.

By the night of the 22d the other three corps were all well abreast of Hancock, or in support of him; while Lee had nearly concentrated his army at Hanover Junction, fifteen to eighteen miles away. He was necessarily as yet uncertain whether Grant would move straight down toward him, or undertake further movements by the left. Grant had, in fact, determined to move directly to the North Anna River, to force its passage. At five o'clock on the morning of the 23d, the Second Corps set out on its march, Birney leading; and about mid-day arrived on the river, at Chesterfield, where a county road crossed the North Anna by a substantial bridge. Here Torbert was found skirmishing with the enemy. Birney, on the right, formed his line across the Telegraph Road; Barlow occupied the centre; Gibbon held the left, extending across the Fredericksburg Railroad; Tyler in reserve. The long lines of the enemy's jaded troops, coming in from their forced march, could be seen on the opposite bank, forming simultaneously with ours; and a sharp artillery fire was opened upon them, compelling them to seek cover in the woods in rear, or in the intrenchments which had already been prepared with a view to this contingency. Artillery was also in position on their side. They still held a small earthwork on our bank of the river, covering the county bridge.

Our advance steadily pushed the enemy backward until their skirmishers were all driven across, though the

bridge-head was held by troops from Kershaw's division. This, accordingly, Hancock determined to carry. Two of Birney's brigades, now under Colonel Thomas W. Egan, Fortieth New York, and Colonel Byron R. Pierce, Third Michigan, were formed for attack, and at half-past six charged across the fields from nearly opposite directions converging upon the earthwork. The two brigades advanced in splendid style over open ground, vying with each other in gallantry of bearing and rapidity of movement, and carrying the intrenchments without a halt. The enemy were driven pell-mell across the river and the bridge seized. Some prisoners were captured. The energy and intelligence displayed by the two brigade commanders on this occasion clearly pointed them out as fitting subjects for the military honors they were subsequently to receive.¹ During the engagement portions of the corps artillery, under Colonel Tidball, were warmly engaged. A section of Arnold's Rhode Island Battery was brought up within close musketry range.

The enemy had made resolute efforts to burn the county bridge when they retreated, and at intervals during the night renewed the attempt, but were foiled and beaten off. They succeeded, however, in partially destroying the railroad bridge. At eight o'clock the next morning Birney's division crossed the river and occupied the abandoned works around the Fox House, after driving away the enemy's skirmishers. Two pontoon bridges were thrown over, below the railroad bridge, on which Barlow's and Gibbon's divisions crossed. Tyler's Heavy Artillery remained on the north bank, holding the cap-

¹ Colonel Pierce was promoted Brigadier-General, to date from June 7th, Colonel Egan, to date from September 3d.



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tured bridge-head and connecting the Second Corps with the Fifth, above.

The general situation was as follows: Warren's corps had reached the river at about the same hour as Hancock, on the 23d, and, without meeting opposition, crossed at Jericho Mills, three miles, or more, above Hancock's crossing. Here, at six o'clock he had been attacked with great fury by A. P. Hill. Cutler's division was broken; but, after a severe fight, the enemy were thrown off from Griffin's front, and Warren's position was made secure. General Lee, however, still held up to the bank of the river at Oxford, about a mile above Chesterfield, and along the river for perhaps three-quarters of a mile, and was thus between Hancock and Warren, who could only communicate with or re-enforce each other by crossing and recrossing the North Anna. From the river the Confederate intrenchments were drawn backward to right and to left, as shown on the map fronting this page. The position was one which would enable Lee to concentrate with great rapidity against either wing of Grant's army, for defence or for attack, although his severe losses in the Wilderness and at Spottsylvania disposed him strongly to await rather than to deliver blows. During the 24th Hancock and Warren drew close up to the Confederate position, on its two main faces. Burnside held the opposite bank of the river, at Oxford; but Stevenson's division of this corps¹ was afterward thrown over to re-enforce Warren, while Potter's was sent to Hancock. The Sixth Corps was assigned to the right wing, to co-operate with Warren. At about six o'clock P.M. of this day Smyth's brigade of Gib-

¹ It was on this day that the Ninth Corps was incorporated in the Army of the Potomac.

bon's division, forming the left of the Second Corps, was smartly engaged with the enemy, who drove in our outposts, but were repulsed, Smyth handling his troops and those sent to his support with judgment and resolution. On the 25th the Confederate line was thoroughly reconnoitred, and tried at various points, and found impregnable. Although the two main faces of Lee's position were apparently subject to an enfilade from our artillery on the other side of the river; yet so great was the natural strength of the ground, so well were the intrenchments traversed, so tenacious was the Southern infantry, that it seemed impossible to produce any serious impression upon them by this means. To have attacked the army of Northern Virginia across intrenchments of the character found here, would have involved a useless slaughter, and have invited Lee, after administering a bloody repulse, to assume the aggressive and throw nearly his whole force on one or the other wing of the Union army. Indeed, the Confederate commander has been severely criticised for not taking advantage of the position in which Grant's forces had been placed, to deal a crushing blow.

The losses of the Second Corps during the period May 21st to 26th, amounted to 543, exclusive of the casualties in a few regiments from which reports were never received, owing to the rapid succession in which marches and battles occurred at this juncture. Of this aggregate 100 were killed; 388 wounded; 55 missing. Of these the artillery brigade lost 4; the First Division, 95; the Second Division, 241; the Third Division, 203. Of the killed, 8 were commissioned officers; of the wounded, 15.

The commissioned officers killed or mortally wounded were Major W. C. Morgan, Third Maine; Captain Pat-

rick McCarthy, and Lieutenants John W. Griffen and Patrick Logue, One Hundred and Seventieth New York; Captain Henry V. Steele, Twenty-sixth Michigan; Lieutenant Henry W. Wadhams, Fourteenth Connecticut; Lieutenants James S. Roberts and Walter F. Noyes, Seventeenth Maine; Lieutenant James Clark, Seventy-first Pennsylvania.

THE TOTOPOTOMOY.

Finding himself thus held, as in a vice, on the North Anna, Grant determined on a yet farther movement to the left. The cavalry had returned from their great raid begun on the 8th of May, during the course of which the brilliant Southern cavalry leader, Stuart, had been killed at Yellow Tavern. Advantage was taken of Sheridan's arrival to send a heavy column around the Confederate left, at once to do as much mischief as possible to the railroad, and to create the impression that Grant's next enterprise was to be in that direction.

While the attention of the enemy was thus occupied, the indomitable commander of the Union armies prepared to withdraw his forces from beyond the North Anna, and attempt his entrance into the Confederate capital by another route. In pursuance of this plan the Army of the Potomac set out, at nightfall of the 26th of May, to cross the Pamunkey River, near Hanover Town, more than thirty miles from the positions occupied on the North Anna. The Sixth Corps was in advance, to move by the roads nearest the enemy which Sheridan undertook to cover with his powerful cavalry. The Second Corps, which had during the day then closing been partially engaged in tearing up the railroad toward Milford, was to follow the Sixth. The Fifth

Corps, followed by the Ninth, was to move by an inside route, and to cross the Pamunkey four miles below Hanover Town.

The Sixth Corps did not leave the road clear, in season for the Second to start, before ten o'clock A.M. of the 27th. At ten o'clock that night the corps bivouacked three miles from the Pamunkey, having in accordance with altered instructions directed its movement on Huntley's. The long march over the dusty roads had made great demands upon the troops; but these were bravely met, in the cheerful expectation that the strategy of the commander-in-chief would at last gain an opportunity to close the campaign with one victorious battle, somewhere in open country, outside intrenchments. The later experiences of Spottsylvania, and the contemplation of the Confederate line on the North Anna, had not increased their zeal for assaulting breastworks covered by slashing and abattis.

The next day, the 28th, the corps crossed the Pamunkey, the most important tributary of the York, and went into position, on the other side, between the Fifth and Sixth Corps, the three corps forming a line in front of Hanover Town. There are three Hanovers, all conspicuous on the map of this region, and frequently named in the history of the war: the Junction, the Court House, and the Town. The last is about seventeen miles from Richmond. Between it and Richmond flows Totopotomoy Creek, which empties into the Pamunkey two miles below the town, protecting thus our left flank, as now in position, but affording in its upper courses a possibly serious obstacle to further progress toward the Confederate capital. Should this be successfully passed, there would still remain to be crossed, in the face of the enemy, the Upper Chickahominy, so well known to the Army

of the Potomac through its experiences of 1862. The Totopotomoy presents much the same physical characters as the Chickahominy, having but little slope, with a broad expanse of low bottom lands on one side or the other, or more commonly on both, heavily timbered, and certain to become an almost impassable swamp after a heavy rain. From Hanover Town a good road runs southwest, through Hawes' Shop, Pole Green Church on the Totopotomoy, Huntley's Corners, and Shady Grove Church, toward Richmond, crossing the Chickahominy at Meadow Bridge.

On the 28th, when the Second Corps crossed the Pamunkey and took position with the Fifth and Sixth, Sheridan was engaged at Hawes' Shop in a contest with the enemy's cavalry, reinforced by Butler's brigade of infantry. The action was very severe, and resulted in the defeat of the enemy. While the Confederate cavalry was thus contesting our advance, Ewell's and Longstreet's corps were forming near Huntley's Corners, with Hill's corps and Breckinridge's troops (the latter newly drawn in from the Valley of Virginia) extending from Ewell's left to Atlee's Station. So ended the 28th of May. Lee had by forced marches got in between Grant and Richmond; and the contest was to be renewed on substantially the same terms as before, the only difference being that it had been transferred to a field nearer the Confederate capital, a fact rather favorable than otherwise to General Lee, as it enabled him to concentrate his forces more completely.

On the day of which we are writing about sixteen thousand of the troops, which, under Butler, had been conducting a co-operative movement on Richmond from the south, were embarking from City Point, to land at the White House, on the Pamunkey. Butler's cam-

paign had proved a costly failure ; and the greater part of his army was now to be brought, under General W. F. ("Baldy") Smith, to reinforce the Army of the Potomac, while Butler himself was left on the James with a force sufficient to hold his lines at Bermuda Hundred.

About noon of the 29th Barlow moved out for a reconnoissance to the Totopotomoy. As the First Division passed Hawes' Shop, the dead of the cavalry fight of the preceding afternoon were seen in considerable numbers. Barlow did not strike the enemy until he reached the junction of the Cold Harbor and the Hanover Court House Roads. Here some cavalry disputed his passage, but were speedily dispersed. On Swift Creek, a tributary of the Totopotomoy, were found breastworks well manned. As Barlow reported that the enemy could not easily be dislodged, Birney and Gibbon were brought forward and formed on his right and left respectively. The other corps were by this time well up. On the 30th Brooke's brigade, which was deployed in front of Gibbon, supported by Owen's brigade, moved against the enemy's line of skirmish pits, and carried them in handsome style. These were immediately converted into cover for our own men. The enemy's position was found to be exceedingly strong—its front covered by the course of the Totopotomoy, much of the ground being marsh. The corps artillery was brought up and a large part of it placed in position along the ridge, on which stood a large and handsome house. After a fierce duel Colonel Tidball succeeded in silencing the enemy, the range being unusually short.

An incident of a curious nature occurred in the yard of the house referred to, during the artillery contest. One of the batteries had removed a limber chest for some reason, and while it was being filled with ammunition

a negro woman, crazy with fright, walked out of the kitchen with a shovelful of hot ashes, which she emptied into the chest. Two men were killed and others wounded by the explosion which resulted, the cause of the mischief escaping unhurt. In the army it always *was* the fool doing the mischief who got off safe. I have known several cases of soldiers opening shells, pouring out all the powder (they always pour out all the powder), and then dropping in a coal or a match to see if there were any powder left. Out of all the lives lost in this way, I never once knew the original idiot to be injured. Speaking of the negro woman coming out of the kitchen brings up the fact that the house was occupied by its customary inhabitants during this cannonade, and recalls a somewhat amusing correspondence on that subject.

General Hancock, after deciding to attempt the passage of the creek, had instructed me to write to the ladies of the house immediately at the crossing, who, as he had learned, were there unprotected, informing them that their estate was likely to be the scene of a severe conflict the next day, and offering them transportation to the rear. This was done, and to save time an ambulance was sent along. In reply to the letter was received, an hour later, a very courteous appeal from the ladies not to make their house the scene of conflict; stating that one of the members of the household was sick and could not well be moved, and requesting that the Second Corps would take some other route. It being not altogether convenient to alter the plans of the Army of the Potomac at so short a notice, it was necessary to reply that the Second Corps could not well change its line of march, and that if they valued their lives they would retire. I not only sent the ambulance a second time, but requested the able and humane medical director of the corps, Dr.

Dougherty, to visit them and see that the sick member of the household suffered no harm. Dr. Dougherty went, but speedily came back. He had pronounced the sick lady to be in a condition to move without the slightest danger ; but his opinion had been received with indignation not of the speechless variety. I myself received a letter, in which the opinions of the household concerning the Congress, President, people, and army of the United States were set forth with the utmost distinctness. The epistle closed with informing me that if any of the family were killed on the morrow their blood would rest upon my soul forevermore. Inasmuch as the only possible chance of their being injured was by shots from cannon manned by Confederates, it was difficult to apprehend the logic of this denunciation. The upshot was that the ladies, sick and well, stayed in the house, having moved down into the cellar. As our signal officers used the roof for purposes of observation the Confederate cannoneers were particularly attentive to it. The house was repeatedly struck, but none of the family in the cellar were hurt.

I resume the account of the operations of the 30th. After the Confederate artillery had been silenced by the superior weight of metal and the commanding position of the Second Corps artillery, no opening appearing which promised success in an assault, General Hancock was directed not to press matters, it being understood that other corps were to attempt to turn the enemy's position ; but at a little after seven o'clock in the evening General Hancock was informed that Warren, on the extreme left, at Bethesda Church, had been violently attacked, and he was directed, "as soon as he could find a suitable place," to assault the enemy, in order to relieve the pressure on the Fifth Corps. Instantly Barlow's

division was launched at the enemy—corps, division, and brigade commanders equally co-operating to make the action prompt and, if possible, successful. In less than thirty minutes from the receipt of the first message General Meade sent an order to cease the attack; but Brooke's brigade had already carried the enemy's advanced line of rifle-pits, in splendid style, over natural obstacles of the most formidable character, and against a stubborn resistance. Darkness now came on, and operations were suspended.

On the morning of the 31st Hancock resumed his efforts to force the crossing of the Totopotomoy. Birney was sent forward on the right, crossed Swift Run, and by a neat dash carried the intrenched skirmish line across the Richmond Road. Gibbon and Barlow then pushed close up to the enemy's works at all points; but the position was found too strong to afford a reasonable prospect of successful assault. The remainder of the day was passed in heavy and incessant skirmishing.

The other corps had met, in general, with no better fortune. Grant therefore determined again to retire from his direct advance toward Richmond, and to throw his army, with all speed, toward Cold Harbor.

The losses of the Corps on the North Anna and the Totopotomoy had been as follows :

| | Killed. | Wounded. | Missing. | Total. |
|-------------------------|---------|----------|----------|--------|
| Commissioned officers.. | 15 | 53 | 2 | 75 |
| Enlisted men..... | 244 | 1,074 | 258 | 1,576 |
| | 259 | 1,132 | 260 | 1,651 |

The commissioned officers killed or mortally wounded on the Totopotomoy were Captain David Crist, One Hun-

dred and Twenty-fourth New York; Captain John F. McCullough, One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania; Captain Daniel Blauvelt, Eighth New Jersey; Captain D. C. Mumford, Nineteenth Massachusetts; Captain P. B. Burwell, Thirty-sixth Wisconsin; Lieutenant James A. Owens, Sixty-first New York; Lieutenant Edward Jackson, Eighty-second New York; Lieutenant Wm. H. Briggs, Third Maine; Lieutenant Peter Hunt, First Rhode Island Artillery.

During the latter days of May it was decided to break up the division of heavy artillery under General Tyler. The Second New York was sent to Miles' brigade; the Seventh, to Brooke's brigade; the First Massachusetts went to the Second Brigade of the Third Division, Colonel Tannatt assuming command by seniority; the First Maine was sent to Mott's brigade of the Third Division. A new brigade, the Fourth, was constituted in Gibbon's division, under command of General Tyler, consisting of the Eighth New York Heavy Artillery and the Corcoran Legion.

The corps return for the 31st of May showed an aggregate, present and absent, of 53,831, distributed as follows:

| | |
|--|--------|
| Corps Headquarters..... | 21 |
| Artillery Brigade (48 guns), Colonel Tidball.. | 3,188 |
| First Division, General Barlow | 15,807 |
| Second Division, General Gibbon..... | 16,046 |
| Third Division, General Birney..... | 18,769 |

The "present for duty" was but about one-half the aggregate, as follows:

| | Commissioned Officers. | Enlisted Men. |
|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Corps Headquarters | 13 | 7 |
| Artillery Brigade | 61 | 1,978 |
| First Division | 379 | 7,409 |
| Second Division..... | 410 | 8,185 |
| Third Division | 429 | 8,029 |
| | <hr/> 1,292 | <hr/> 25,608—26,900 |

CHAPTER XVIII.

COLD HARBOR—JUNE 2 TO 12, 1864.

ON the 1st of June Sheridan, who, with the cavalry, had occupied Cold Harbor in advance of the infantry, was severely engaged with the Confederate cavalry and infantry, but held on, with great determination, until the head of the Sixth Corps came up. Then Sheridan moved straightway to the Chickahominy, to cover the left. The Sixth Corps was in a position not without danger, since Smith's Eighteenth Corps, of the Army of the James, moving up from White House, had been sent astray by an error in his instructions; while, on the other hand, the Confederates, anticipating the movement to Cold Harbor, had concentrated very strongly on their own right, between Cold Harbor and Bethesda Church. By six o'clock in the evening the Eighteenth Corps was in position, and any danger of disaster was well passed. Four divisions of the Confederate army opposed Wright and Smith, viz.: Hoke's, Kershaw's, Pickett's, and Field's.

At about six o'clock Wright and Smith attacked, with varying fortune and heavy losses, but on the whole successfully. Portions of the enemy's intrenched lines were carried, and many hundreds of prisoners taken. The two corps under Wright and Smith having thus occupied Cold Harbor, and even gained considerable advantages, in spite of an unexpectedly large concentration of the

hostile forces, Hancock was despatched, in haste, to join them. General Meade's order was unusually urgent. In it he wrote : " You must make every exertion to move promptly, and reach Cold Harbor as soon as possible. At that point you will take position to reinforce Wright on his left, which it is desired to extend to the Chickahominy. Every confidence is felt that your gallant corps of veterans will move with vigor and endure the necessary fatigue." So much as this is rarely expressed in the formal orders from headquarters ; and General Hancock took it in earnest. The instructions of General Meade would have been fully carried out had it not been for the error of one of his own staff, a faithful and excellent officer of engineers, who undertook to conduct the column, by a short cut, through a wood-road. After moving for some distance the road was found to narrow gradually, until finally the guns were fairly caught between the trees and unable to move. In the darkness much confusion arose throughout the column, and the troops became mixed to a degree which made it difficult to straighten them out again. The night had been intensely hot and breathless, and the march through roads deep with dust, which rose in suffocating clouds as it was stirred by thousands of feet of men and horses and by the wheels of the artillery, had been exceedingly trying. The misadventure which occurred through the wrong direction given to the column put it out of General Hancock's power to reach Cold Harbor at daybreak of the 2d of June. It was not until between six and seven o'clock that the troops began to arrive, and then in an extremely exhausted condition. During the march General Meade had sent on orders changing the destination, and directing an immediate attack ; but on the causes of delay and the condition of the troops being reported,

the attack was suspended until 5 P.M., and was then put off until half-past four the next morning.

The formation of the Army of the Potomac, with reference to the great assault now impending, was as follows: Our right, from the Pamunkey to Bethesda Church, was covered by Wilson's division of cavalry. General Warren stretched from Bethesda Church about three miles, to near Beulah Church, his extended front being partially protected by swamps. Burnside's corps had been ordered to form in rear, in support of Warren's right. Then came Smith's Eighteenth Corps; then Wright's Sixth; the Second Corps held the left of the line: Gibbon's division first; then Barlow's, on the extreme flank; Birney was in reserve.

Now, while Grant was thus contemplating an attack on the morning of the 3d, Lee was already initiating a movement against our right flank. Having discovered our abandonment of the line of the Totopotomoy, he sent Early's corps against Burnside. The Ninth Corps was caught while retiring and many of its skirmishers were captured. Early, sweeping down our line, from the right, struck the flank of Warren's corps, capturing some of his skirmishers, and at once moved on against Warren's right and rear. Here Griffin's division was encountered; and this, after a severe contest, in which the Confederate General Doles was killed, forced back Rodes' division; while Crittenden's division, of the Ninth Corps, subsequently reinforced by Potter and Willcox, checked and held the division of Heth. So the day closed, both armies thoroughly intrenching themselves during the night.

Lee's line was a very strong one. Its right rested on the Chickahominy, amid swamps, but soon rose to high ground and ran in a direction a little west of north, to

Early's position, which looked to the northeast. The road from Despatch Station, past Barker's Mill, to Cold Harbor, ran along the foot of the high ground forming Lee's right, much of the way sunken below the general level of the ground, until it diverged and ran into the Union lines on the front of Gibbon's division. Along this part of the road, near the foot of the high ground, was an advanced line of Confederate intrenchments. Hill and Breckenridge, with probably a part of Hoke's division, held this portion of the enemy's lines. It was here the Second Corps was to be called to attack, on the fateful morning of the 3d. Then followed the rest of Hoke's division, then Longstreet's corps, and then Early's, forming Lee's left. The Confederate army was, at last, at bay, close on Richmond, the city being distant only about six miles; the forts protecting the city only half that distance. It was no longer practicable to turn either flank of Lee's position. His right rested on the Chickahominy. His left was hidden among the wooded swamps of the Totopotomoy and the Matadequin. No opportunity had been afforded to make an adequate reconnoissance of the line, to ascertain whether it could be carried in front; but General Grant determined to hazard a grand assault, in view of the momentous consequences of a victory here. The Second Corps on the Union left; the Sixth on the centre; and the Eighteenth on the right, were to attack, each on its own front, at half-past four.

Much to the relief of the troops, who had been suffering intensely from the torrid heat and the choking dust of the preceding day, rain began to fall in the late afternoon of the 2d, and continued throughout the night, with occasional intervals. When day broke the Second Corps had been formed in column of assault as follows: Barlow's division had, in front, the brigades of Miles and



Brooke, deployed; the brigades commanded, respectively, by Colonel Byrnes (Twenty-eighth Massachusetts) and Colonel McDougall (One Hundred and Eleventh New York) constituted the second line. On the right, Gibbon's division was also in two lines. Tyler's and Smyth's brigades deployed in front; the brigades commanded respectively by General Owen and Colonel McKeen,¹ of the Eighty-first Pennsylvania, in close column of regiments, in rear. Birney's division was in support.

At the signal Barlow advanced, and found the enemy strongly posted in the sunken road, from which he drove them, after a severe struggle, following them into their works under a heavy fire of musketry and artillery. Two or three hundred prisoners, one color, and three cannon fell into Barlow's hands. The captured guns were turned on the enemy by Colonel L. O. Morris, of the Seventh New York Heavy Artillery, and the most strenuous efforts made to hold the position; but the supports were slow in coming up, an enfilading fire of artillery swept down the first line, the works in rear opened upon them, and large bodies of fresh troops, from Breckinridge's division, reinforced by Hill, advanced, with the utmost determination to retake the position. The first line held on with great stubbornness, but was finally forced out, Brooke being severely wounded, Colonel Byrnes and Colonel O. H. Morris killed. Though compelled to retire, the men of the leading brigades would not go far. A portion of the line—Colonel Beaver's regiment, the One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, being conspicuous for its soldierly bearing—fell back to a slight

¹ Colonel McKeen had, a few days before, been sent over from the First Division to command this brigade.

crest, opposite the enemy's intrenchments, and distant only thirty to seventy-five yards therefrom; and proceeded to cover themselves by loosening the earth with their bayonets and scraping it up with their hands or tin-plates, and here, at little more than pistol range, they remained throughout the day. Miles' brigade also effected a lodgement in the works, Hapgood's Fifth New Hampshire, recently returned from the North, being foremost in the assault; but these troops also were driven out by the enfilading fire of the Confederate artillery, and by the strong lines advanced against them.

On the right Gibbon's division had had no better fortune. That officer had directed his second line to follow closely, and, at a given point, push rapidly forward, pass the first, effecting, if possible, a lodgement in the enemy's works and then deploying. In his advance Gibbon's line was cut in two by an impassable swamp, which widened as he approached the works. The existence of this had not been known, in the absence of any reconnoissance. The fire of artillery and musketry was terrific. General Tyler fell seriously wounded. Colonel McKeen, bringing his brigade gallantly up on the right of Tyler, was killed. Colonel Haskell, of the Thirty-sixth Wisconsin, succeeding to McKeen's command, also fell mortally wounded. The troops struggled on against the furious blast of fire from the fully manned works on the high ground. Colonel McMahon, of the One Hundred and Sixty-fourth New York, having become separated by the swamp from the rest of Haskell's brigade, at last gained the breastworks, at the head of a portion of his regiment, with his colors in his hand, but fell dead in the midst of the enemy. A portion of Smyth's brigade, also re-forming and advancing after their first repulse, gained the intrenchments; but Owen's failure

to bring up his brigade left Smyth's shattered command unsupported. At last, scarcely twenty-two minutes from the time the signal was given, the repulse of the corps was complete. Three thousand men had fallen. Among officers the losses had been portentous. Colonels McKee, Byrnes, Haskell, O. H. Morris, McMahon, and Porter had been killed; General Tyler and Colonel Brooke had been severely wounded. When the fearful losses of the preceding month are remembered, it will be seen how extraordinary was the proportion of officers of high rank killed in this brief contest.

Colonel Harry Boyd McKee, of Pennsylvania, had greatly distinguished himself at Fair Oaks and during the "Seven Days." At Antietam he commanded his regiment with as much address as gallantry; and in nearly every subsequent action of the corps his splendid figure, the ideal of manly beauty and grace, had been conspicuous. Soldiers loved to follow where he would lead; and where would he not lead? The idol of his men, the admiration of his superiors in rank, the bullet that took his life at Cold Harbor extinguished one of the brightest lights of the old Second Corps. His regiment remained in charge of Lieutenant-Colonel William Wilson, having been so much reduced by losses in battle, as the result of the gallantry and devotion of its officers and men, that a grateful country deemed it unworthy any longer to have a commander of the rank of colonel.

Colonel Richard Byrnes, of Massachusetts, was an officer of the regular army; a good disciplinarian in camp; cool and resolute in action; mingling, in just proportion, impetuosity with sound judgment. His regiment remained under command of Lieutenant-Colonel George W. Cartright.

Colonel Frank A. Haskell, of Wisconsin, had been

known for his intelligence and courage, for his generosity of character and his exquisite culture, long before the third day at Gettysburg, when, acting as aide to General Gibbon, he rode mounted between the two lines, then swaying backward and forward under each other's fire, calling upon the men of the Second Division to follow him, and setting an example of valor and self-devotion never forgotten by any man of the thousands who witnessed it. He had been promoted from a lieutenancy to a colonelcy for his bearing on this occasion. He was succeeded in the command of his regiment by Colonel James A. Savage, killed a fortnight later.

Colonel O. H. Morris, of New York, was one of the veterans of the corps; brave, capable, and faithful. The regiment remained in command of Lieutenant-Colonel John S. Hammill.

Colonel James P. McMahon, of New York, had been but a brief three weeks with the Army of the Potomac; but he brought to it a lofty courage and a chivalrous sense of duty which did honor even to the old corps of Sumner. Colonel McMahon was brother to General Martin McMahon, so long and honorably known as Adjutant-General of the Sixth Corps. Another brother had died in 1863, as colonel of the One Hundred and Sixty-fourth. After Colonel James McMahon's death, the regiment remained under command of Lieutenant-Colonel William DeLacy.

Colonel Peter A. Porter, also of New York, and also new to the Second Corps, fell with great honor, at the head of his splendid regiment. James M. Willett became colonel of the Eighth New York Heavy Artillery.

The other officers killed or mortally wounded were:

Captain George F. Goodwin and Lieutenant Mason W. Humphrey, Fifth New Hampshire.

Captain Michael O'Brien and Lieutenant Marcus Kenyon, Second New York Heavy Artillery.¹

Captains Alexander Gardner and William J. Hawkins, and Lieutenants Joseph S. Caldwell, Fayette S. Brown, A. L. Chase, Wallace B. Hard, G. Gladden, and Oliver M. Campbell, Eighth New York Heavy Artillery.

Captain William S. Schuyler and Lieutenant Richard Dumphrey, One Hundred and Fifty-fifth New York.

Captains Edward K. Butler and John H. Nugent, Sixty-ninth New York Militia (One Hundred and Eighty-second Volunteers).

Captain Isaac Plumb and Lieutenant Joel C. Perrington, Sixty-first New York.

Captains Thomas Hickey and William Maroney, and Lieutenant Robert Boyle, One Hundred and Sixty-fourth New York.

Captain James McComb, Twelfth New Jersey.

Captain Joseph R. Smith, One Hundred and Eighty-third Pennsylvania.

Captain M. H. Barclay and Lieutenants John B. Read, Thomas J. McClure, and Charles S. Evans, Seventh New York Heavy Artillery.

Lieutenant David F. Potter, Seventh Virginia.

Lieutenant James E. Byrnes, Eighty-eighth New York.

Lieutenant John S. Kinleyside, One Hundred and Eighth New York.

Lieutenants Joseph S. Abraham, James M. Reddy, and Edward McCaffrey, One Hundred and Sixty-fourth New York.

Lieutenant Michael Keating, Eighty-second New York.

Lieutenant Henry H. Jones, Second Delaware.

¹ Captain William H. Roff was killed a few days later.

Lieutenant Abram Hunton, Jr., One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York.

Lieutenant James B. West, Twenty-eighth Massachusetts.

Lieutenant William Whildey, adjutant, Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Benjamin V. Draper, First Delaware.

Lieutenant Jacob S. Lander, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant S. R. Townsend, One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenants William D. Williams and S. Hamilton Norman, One Hundred and Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant William H. Lamberton, Thirty-sixth Wisconsin.

Lieutenant Samuel C. Snell, One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant John B. Thompson, Nineteenth Massachusetts.

Although the repulse of both divisions had been decisive, the troops yet clung tenaciously to the ground nearest the Confederate works, wherever so much as half-cover could be obtained. In some cases our men lay within thirty yards of the enemy; at other places, according to the configuration of the ground, the line ran away to fifty, seventy, a hundred, or more. Here the troops intrenched themselves, by bayonet and tin-plate, until a beginning had been made, and waited for night to go to work on a larger scale with better tools.

Meanwhile, Wright and Smith had been attacking on their respective fronts. Each was beaten back after a severe struggle. Burnside had also tried the enemy's line and been repulsed.

At nine o'clock General Hancock received the following despatch :

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
June 3, 1864, 8.45 A.M.

MAJOR-GENERAL HANCOCK :

I send you two notes from Wright, who thinks he can carry the enemy's main line if he is relieved by attacks of the Second and Eighteenth Corps. Also, that he is under the impression that he is in advance of you. It is of the greatest importance that no effort should be spared to succeed. Wright and Smith are both going to try again ; and unless you consider it hopeless I would like you to do the same.

GEORGE G. MEADE,
Major-General.

General Hancock declining¹ the responsibility of renewing the attack, Birney's division was detached and sent to the right to support General Warren, whence it did not return until the 5th ; and Ricketts' Pennsylvania battery was detached to report to the Eighteenth Corps.

As evening came on a furious fire broke out along the two lines, now so near together that in many cases no pickets could be thrown out. This was supposed to indicate an attempt by an unseen enemy to carry our lines in the dark with a rush. The Confederate reports, on their part, speak of being attacked at this time ; from which it is fair to conclude that at least the greatest part of the firing was done from the breastworks on either side. The Second Corps intrenchments, so rapidly constructed under heavy fire, at an almost incredibly short distance from the Confederate line, had by this time been sufficiently strengthened to make them as formidable to

¹ It has been publicly stated that the order to attack was given, but that the troops refused to advance : the statement is erroneous.

the enemy as theirs to us ; and in this critical and painful situation the two armies settled down to watch each other. The day of the 4th was characterized by heavy artillery practice and by extreme sharpshooting. Whenever a head appeared for an instant, it became the target for a score of shots. A portion of Gibbon's line was so near that it became necessary to dig "covered ways," by which alone the troops could be withdrawn or reinforced, or rations and ammunition brought up. Among the victims of this day was Colonel Lewis O. Morris, Seventh New York Heavy Artillery, who had, on the 3d, succeeded Brooke in command of his brigade. Colonel Morris, an officer of the old army, had shown great courage and capacity in the assault of the preceding day. He was succeeded in the command of his regiment by Colonel Richard C. Duryea, and in the command of the brigade by Colonel James A. Beaver, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, an officer whose sterling worth had grown steadily on the appreciation of troops and commanders alike. The approach of night brought another outburst of infantry firing, which was again interpreted by our troops to mean an attempt of the enemy to carry our works, so near to them, by a sudden dash ; but which probably was due to the collision of pickets in the dark.

June 5th was, in its essential character, a repetition of the 4th. Through all this dreadful interval it was known that scores of our desperately wounded were lying in the narrow space between the two lines, uncared for and without water.

All who could crawl in, on the one side or the other, had done so ; hundreds had been brought in at great risk to their rescuers ; but there were still those who lay where it was simple death for a Union soldier to show his head

for an instant. Doubtless many who had been only wounded by the bullets of the enemy, in the great charge, had already been killed by the firing from the breast-works, during the two evening alarms. Moreover, the dead of the 3d nearly all lay where they had fallen. At about five in the afternoon Colonel Theodore Lyman, of General Meade's staff, and Major Mitchell, of Hancock's, carried out a flag of truce, on the Despatch Station Road; and were met by Major Wooten, of the Eighteenth North Carolina. General Lee being absent from his headquarters, no reply was received until nearly ten o'clock. The flag was sent out again on the following day, with a letter from General Grant to General Lee; but it was not until the 7th that an arrangement was reached for a cessation of hostilities, from 6 to 8 P.M., for burying the dead and removing the wounded.

Of this long delay General Morgan thus speaks: "It was understood at the time that the delay was caused by something akin to points of etiquette, General Grant proposing a flag as a mutual accommodation, and General Lee replying that he had no dead or wounded not attended to, but offering to grant a truce if General Grant desired it to attend to his own. The assault occurred on the morning of the 3d, the first flag was not sent until the evening of the 5th, and the cessation of hostilities did not finally take place until nearly five full days after the assault.

"It is, perhaps, unnecessary to say that the wounded who had not been able to crawl into our lines at night were now past caring for, and the dead were in a horrible state of putrefaction. Better the consuming fires of the Wilderness and the Potomac than the lingering, agonizing death of these poor men, whose vain calls for relief smote upon the ears of their comrades at every lull in the fir-

ing. One man was brought into our lines who had survived the dreadful ordeal, and his accounts of his sufferings, how he had quenched his thirst by sucking the dew from such grass as he could pull at his side, and had allayed the pangs of hunger in the same way, were not well calculated to encourage his comrades to run any risk of being placed in the same position."

Badeau seeks to throw the responsibility for this delay upon General Lee; and adds to his extended account of the negotiations the following remark, clearly intended to be sarcastic and cutting; "Whether his military reputation gained sufficiently to compensate for the sufferings he deliberately and unnecessarily prolonged, is questionable." But, surely, if the wounded between the two lines were Union, and not Confederate, soldiers, as they unmistakably were; and if the assault of the 3d had been a defeat to us, as it clearly was, it became the part of the Union commander to ask for an opportunity to care for the wounded, as a favor to himself and his army. Nothing is plainer than that General Lee was fairly entitled to all the moral and military advantages to be derived from the fact that he had beaten off Grant's assault.

From the moment the Second Corps had taken position at Cold Harbor, General Hancock had kept his headquarters in unnecessarily close proximity to the line of battle. On the night of the 7th another outburst occurred, just after dark, which soon rose to the greatest fury. The troops in the trenches were comparatively safe; but the plain behind was swept by musketry and artillery fire. The headquarters of the corps were riddled by bullets; and the Assistant Provost-Marshal, Captain Alexander M. McCune, Seventy-fourth New York, was killed by a solid shot while standing at the door of General Hancock's tent. It was, indeed, a hid-

eous time. No one who was exposed to the fury of that storm will ever forget how the horrors of battle were heightened by the blackness of the night. The lesson was not lost on General Hancock. However he might choose to deal with his own life, he recognized his responsibility for the lives of the young men he had called around him, and early on the morning of the 8th the corps headquarters were moved back to a more suitable locality.

THE NEW FLANK MOVEMENT.

I have said that the immediate position which General Lee had taken could not be turned either by its right or by its left. But afar off to the south, across the Chickahominy and across the James, lay the city of Petersburg, controlling the communications of Richmond with the main country of the Confederacy. Hither the indomitable Lieutenant-General had already determined to transfer his army, hoping by carefully planned and rapidly executed movements to seize the Cockade City and compel Lee to assume the offensive, for his very life. To this end the Army of the Potomac was to be held in its trenches in front of Cold Harbor several days longer, and all the appearance of active operations was to be maintained. The duty was, of necessity, exceedingly trying to the troops, especially those of the Second Corps, which lay nearest the enemy. Through all the day, not a man, over large parts of the line, could show his head above the works or go ten yards to the rear without being shot. The whole corps was kept, day and night, in the same trying position as, in ordinary siege operations, only the actual engineering and fatigue details are expected to occupy. This continued until the night of the 12th, when the corps was stealthily with-

drawn from its works and set afoot for the crossing of the Chickahominy.

The losses from the 2d to the 12th had been :

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| Killed..... | 494 |
| Wounded | 2,442 |
| Missing..... | 574 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 3,510 |

These losses¹ were distributed by divisions as follows, the Third Division not having participated in the main assault :

| | |
|-------------------------|-------|
| Corps Headquarters..... | 1 |
| Artillery Brigade..... | 54 |
| First Division..... | 1,561 |
| Second Division..... | 1,674 |
| Third Division..... | 220 |
| | <hr/> |
| | 3,510 |

The losses had been divided between commissioned officers and enlisted men as follows :

| | Commissioned Officers. | Enlisted Men. |
|---------------|------------------------|---------------|
| Killed..... | 36 | 458 |
| Wounded | 113 | 2,329 |
| Missing | 11 | 563 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | 160 | 3,350 |

¹ In the foregoing statement the correct figures of the Second Corps losses at Cold Harbor are given for the first time. This has been rendered possible by the courtesy of Colonel Robert N. Scott, of the War Department, Washington, whose admirable work in compiling and collecting the records of the War deserves the gratitude of his countrymen. The figures in the text differ by many hundreds from the previously published statements. The corrections introduced by Colonel Scott into the account of the losses of the Second Corps in the Wilderness are of even greater importance, raising the total from 3,761, the usual statement, to 5,092, the true aggregate.

Such was Cold Harbor¹ to the Second Army Corps. I have hesitated long before writing the melancholy words of General Morgan: "The Second Corps here received a mortal blow, and never again was the same body of men." General Morgan goes on to say that between the Rapidan and the Chickahominy, a period of about thirty days, the losses of the corps had averaged over four hundred daily. "It was not in numbers only that the loss was so grievously felt. Between those rivers the corps had lost terribly in its leaders; the men whose presence and example were worth many thousand men. Hays, Abbott, Merriam, Carroll, Webb, Brown, Coons, Tyler, Byrnes, Brooke, Haskell, McKeen, McMahon, Porter, the Morrisises, and many other gallant men were dead or lost to the corps; and though there were many brave and efficient officers left, the place of those who had been taken could not be filled." These are sad words, but they are true.

Down to the point we have reached, the body of troops which had been organized by Sumner had, it is true, been most fortunate in its opportunities; but its transcendent deeds had been mainly of its own daring and its own deserving. It had wrested twenty-five cannon from the enemy; it had lost one, disabled. It had taken more than eighty flags in battle; it had yielded perhaps half a dozen, in the Wilderness, at Spottsylvania, and at Cold Harbor. Its "missing," in all its terrible battles, had been about five thousand; it had captured over eleven thousand Confederates in action. It had not been more impetuous in assault than steady, enduring, and resourceful in disaster and defeat. In the long column which

¹ "I have always regretted that the last assault at Cold Harbor was ever made."—General Grant, in his *Autobiography*.

wound its way, in the darkness, out of the intrenchments at Cold Harbor, on the 12th of June, 1864, and took the road to the Chickahominy; little remained of the divisions that had crossed that river, on the 31st of May, 1862, to the rescue of the broken left wing; and the historian feels that, as he concludes the story of Cold Harbor, he is, in a sense, writing the epitaph of the Second Corps.

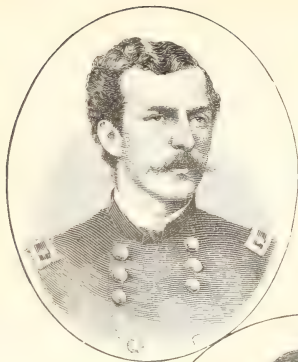
CHAPTER XIX.

PETERSBURG.

GRANT'S purpose in leaving the ill-omened neighborhood of Cold Harbor was to occupy Petersburg, far to the south. It was not anticipated that the actual capture of this place would devolve upon the Army of the Potomac, inasmuch as General Butler had been directed to seize it in advance. Butler's expedition, however, undertaken on the 9th and 10th of June, failed, with the sole effect of drawing down considerable reinforcements to the garrison. Yet there was still every reason to hope that the great flank movement would be successful, so well had it been planned, so prudently and so vigorously had its first stages been executed.

The route chosen covered an extent of fifty miles ; but so excellent were the arrangements projected by General Humphreys, as chief of staff, that the Confederates were not only outmarched but distinctly outgeneralled.

Warren was to cross the Chickahominy at Long Bridge and cover the crossing of the other corps below, while the vast trains should move at a still greater distance from the enemy. Smith, however, with the Eighteenth Corps, was to march to White House, having the right of way over everything—infantry, artillery, or cavalry ; trains, hospitals, or supplies—and there embark his troops to report to Butler at Bermuda Hundred, whence he received orders to start at daylight of the 15th for Petersburg.



MAJ.-GEN. NELSON A. MILES

BREVET MAJ.-GEN. BYRON R. PIERCE

MAJ.-GEN. GERSHOM MOTT

BREVET MAJ.-GEN. THOMAS W. EGAN

BREVET BRIG.-GEN. JOHN G. HAZARD

Meanwhile the other corps had been toiling on their long march overland, and had carried out the plan of movement with more success, even, than had been anticipated, owing to the unexpectedly large effect produced upon General Lee's mind by the advance of Warren from Long Bridge, threatening a direct attack on Richmond along the Charles City, Darbytown, and New Market Roads.

During the night of the 12th the several divisions of the Second Corps—in order, Barlow, Gibbon, and Birney—were withdrawn from the intrenchments of Cold Harbor, the delicate duty of relieving the picket line, in direct contact with the enemy, having been performed with great skill by Lieutenant-Colonel Hammill, of the Sixty-sixth New York, assisted by Captain William P. Wilson, of the corps staff; and by early morning of the 13th the head of column reached Jones' Bridge, on the Chickahominy. Under cover of Warren's advance up the roads to Richmond, Hancock pushed on, and before dark brought his divisions into bivouac on the James River, at Wilcox's Landing, near Charles City Court House. Burnside and Wright, with the Ninth and Sixth Corps, were at this time still on the Chickahominy, awaiting the laying of the pontoons over which they were to cross during the night. As the movements of the Second Corps on the 14th and 15th have been made the matter of protracted controversy, I quote General Humphreys' statement: "As soon on the 14th as any boats were available, General Hancock began crossing his troops from Wilcox's Landing to Windmill Point, and by four o'clock on the morning of the 15th all his infantry and four batteries of artillery had landed on the south bank. The means of crossing were very limited, and the landing-places, wharves, and roads were incomplete. At half-past

six on the morning of the 15th three ferry-boats were added to his means of crossing, and greatly facilitated the passage of his artillery and wagons.

“On the evening of the 14th he was directed by General Meade to hold his troops in readiness to move, and was informed that it was probable he would be instructed to march toward Petersburg, and that rations for his command would be sent him from City Point. At ten o'clock that night the following despatch was sent him by General Meade : ‘General Butler has been ordered to send to you, at Windmill Point, 60,000 rations. So soon as these are received and issued, you will move your corps by the most direct route to Petersburg, taking up a position where the City Point Railroad crosses Harrison’s Creek, where we now have a work. After Barlow has crossed, you will cross as much of your artillery and ammunition train as possible up to the moment you are ready to move, and, if all is quiet at that time, the ferryage of the rest can be continued and they can join you.’ But the rations did not arrive, as expected, that night or the next morning, and the corps marched without them, at half-past ten on the 15th.”

The reader will understand that it was proposed to despatch the Second Corps from Windmill Point, on the James, to Petersburg, sixteen or seventeen miles, on the morning of the 15th ; and that it had been expected that the corps would start on this expedition provisioned, having taken three days’ rations at the Point. It was this matter of the issue of rations which proved the first cause of delay on the 15th. General Morgan states that, having during the night sent both the quartermaster and the commissary to the wharf to make preparations for the prompt receipt and issue of the stores, he at eight o'clock A.M. was informed by the engineer officer charged

with repairing the wharf at which the transport was to discharge these rations that the vessel had just arrived. Morgan adds: "I saw a transport then lying at the wharf, and after watching it for a length of time sufficient to allow of its being unloaded it disappeared. I reported, therefore, to General Hancock that the rations had come and were being issued." Now, the information which Morgan thus communicated to General Hancock proved to be erroneous, the vessel at the wharf not being the one expected. But in consequence of that information General Meade, who, at half-past seven, had sent word to Hancock to move without the rations, authorized him to exercise his judgment as to which would be best—to issue rations then, or to have the vessel containing the subsistence stores sent around to the Appomattox.

Unfortunately, General Hancock had not been informed that General Smith was to make an attack on Petersburg and that great results might depend on his reaching his destination an hour earlier or later. He had been simply told to move toward Petersburg, and there take up a position. As any good commander would, General Hancock preferred to march with his troops rationed; and not knowing—what General Meade himself did not know—that Petersburg was to be assaulted, he took advantage of the alternative offered him, until, at about nine o'clock, it was discovered that the information received regarding the arrival of commissary stores at Windmill Point was erroneous, whereupon he ordered the corps to move without the rations. But here occurred a second cause of delay. "The signal officer," says General Humphreys, "by whom the order was sent failed, in some way, to communicate it, and the boat in which Colonel Morgan, who carried the same order,

crossed the river grounded, so that the column did not begin to move until half-past ten."

Although the immediate cause of this loss of time was found in the misunderstandings and miscarryings related, the real cause lay in the failure of General Grant to inform General Meade of Smith's contemplated attack. Had this been known by Generals Meade and Hancock, there would have been no thought of waiting for rations ; the troops would have been off at six o'clock, and could have easily reached Petersburg at one o'clock ; in which case the city would have fallen beyond a peradventure. But now is to be added a still further cause of delay, in the fact that Hancock's marching orders, founded upon erroneous information, were self-contradictory and incapable of execution. Here, again, I prefer to quote General Humphreys' words : "He was to 'take up a position where the City Point Railroad crossed Harrison's Creek, where we now have a work ;' and this condition did not admit of his continuing on the most direct road, but obliged him to leave it, and, turning to the right, take one several miles longer, after much delay in seeking in vain to ascertain from the people of the country where Harrison's Creek was, and what roads led to it, for the maps in use were, for this section of country, so erroneous as to be not only useless, but misleading. Harrison's Creek was, in fact, inside the enemy's intrenchments, and was such an insignificant rivulet as probably not to be known by any name much beyond the limits of Petersburg.

"There was a run marked on the map as Harrison's Creek, but erroneously laid down. This stream, according to the map, was crossed by the railroad about three and a half miles from Petersburg. There was actually a diminutive stream crossed by the City Point Railroad

half-way between City Point and Petersburg, about five miles from each, and this rivulet emptied into the Appomattox near the pontoon bridge of General Butler at Broadway Landing, where there was a bridge-head, as there was at the site of the pontoon bridge a mile and a half above. These works appear to be referred to in the despatch by the phrase 'where we now have a work,' for we had no work where the railroad crossed the run."

Sent wrong by these orders, his line of march increased several miles, after his time of starting had been delayed several hours, Hancock led forward the corps without an intimation that his presence was to be imperatively required at Petersburg. So far as he had any reason to think, it would be sufficient if he brought up his corps, in good condition, in season to go fairly into camp by night-fall. Under such conditions a judicious commander does not allow his men to be pressed to the utmost on a hot day. The corps made the march steadily and continuously, the ground to be covered being, in consequence of the instructions referred to, about twenty miles. As the afternoon advanced, random artillery firing was heard upon the left and front. Inquiry of the country people elicited the information that General Kautz's division of cavalry had gone out in that direction; and Hancock saw no reason to attribute to the firing any special significance. Meanwhile Smith, who since morning had been reconnoitring the works at Petersburg, preparatory to assault, had no intimation that any troops of the Army of the Potomac were marching to his assistance, until, at about four in the afternoon, he was advised by a staff officer from Grant that the Second Corps was on the way to join him; upon which Smith at once sent a despatch to Hancock requesting him to come up as rapidly as possible. Hancock received this message at half-past

five,¹ when he was still about four miles from Smith's left ; but it was now stale news, for, a few minutes before, he had received an order from the Lieutenant-General directing him to make all haste to get forward to the support of Smith, who was stated to have carried some of the enemy's works. Everything was at once bent to this end ; the search for the apocryphal "Harrison's Creek" was abandoned. Birney's head of column was just passing a cross road, by which it was sent on to Petersburg ; Gibbon followed ; while Barlow, who, with the trains, had been marching on another road, was ordered to close the interval as soon as possible. Unfortunately, Barlow had lost his way owing to errors in the maps, and could not get up till late at night.

As soon as Grant's despatch was received, Morgan rode forward to inform Smith of the approach of the Second Corps. "I reported to him on the field," says Morgan, "I think as early as 6.30 P.M., informing him of the exact position of the corps, and asking him where, under the circumstances, the troops ought to go. He said, 'On my left,' but neither indicated to me where his left was nor sent a staff officer. Finally he referred me to General Hinks for the information. Captain Wilson and myself started back to find General Hinks, and

¹ A great deal has been made of the despatch said to have been sent by General Hancock to General Butler, informing that officer that his (Hancock's) leading division connected with General Smith "*about five o'clock.*" Badeau uses this to disprove the statements of Meade and Hancock relative to the operations of the 15th. Such a despatch was sent, but the hour named was not five o'clock. At that time Hancock was still several miles from Petersburg, and had not the faintest notion that General Smith was assaulting that place. The hour written was probably *eight* o'clock, the figures 5 and 8, when written in pencil, on a scrap of paper, by the light of a camp-fire, being easily confounded.

met a staff officer of General Birney's, sent forward to report to General Smith. On my advice he returned at once, with Captain Wilson,¹ to conduct the head of column to such point as General Hinks might advise." The head of General Birney's column was now, say 6.30 P.M., at the Byrant House, about a mile in rear of Hinks' position. "Leaving instructions," says General Humphreys, "for Birney and Gibbon to move forward as soon as they could ascertain where they were needed, General Hancock rode to General Smith and informed him that two of his divisions were close at hand, ready for any movements which in his judgment should be made. General Smith, informing him that the enemy had been reinforced during the evening, requested him to relieve his troops in the front line of the captured works. This relief was completed by eleven o'clock, by which time, General Hancock says, it was too late and too dark for an immediate advance."

Such is the story of the 15th of June, a day which was a very black one in the calendar of the gallant commander of the Second Corps, who bitterly felt the imputations which malice or ignorance led certain persons in high station, as well as some irresponsible critics, to cast upon him. Stung by the reflections on his conduct, General Hancock addressed a letter to General Meade, reciting with completeness and particularity the occurrences of

¹ Since these lines were sent to press the gallant and capable officer named herein, Captain, afterward Colonel, Wilson, has died at his home in Trenton. He was of the finest type of staff officer: always cool, collected, and sensible; disregarding alike fatigue and danger; keenly observant of everything that related to his mission, and always bringing back reports which meant something, and could be acted upon without sending someone else to see, or going yourself to look.

that day, and requesting an official investigation. This letter General Meade forwarded to Lieutenant-General Grant, with an indorsement which concluded as follows: "I do not see that any censure can be attached to General Hancock and his corps." The subject cannot be better concluded than with the words, in reply, of the Lieutenant-General, in whose military character a strong sense of justice mingled with that great, that rare wisdom which looks forward to what remains to be done, and lets the dead past bury its dead. "The reputation of the Second Corps and its commander is so high, both with the public and in the army, that an investigation could not add to it. It cannot be tarnished by newspaper articles or scribblers. No official despatch has ever been sent from these headquarters which, by any construction, could cast blame on the Second Corps or its commander for the part they have played in this campaign."

THE SIXTEENTH OF JUNE.

Unfortunately, the misunderstandings and mistakes of the 15th were carried into the 16th, permitting the Confederates to strengthen and finally to confirm their hold on Petersburg which the excellent strategy of Grant had, for thirty-six hours, placed fairly at the mercy of the Union army. It is difficult to say how much of the failure to seize the opportunity offered was due to the fact that the fatigues and excitement of the past forty days had brought about a renewal of General Hancock's disability from his severe Gettysburg wounds. That gallant and devoted officer, who, day or night, never spared himself, whether in camp, on the march, or in battle, was now suffering intense pain, as fragments of the badly

splintered bone, dislodged by six weeks of almost continuous labor in the saddle, began to work their way out of the inflamed flesh, requiring him frequently to seek rest in an ambulance or on the ground, when otherwise he would have been galloping over the field or leading the march of his foremost division.

Another fact which seriously interfered with the proper movements of the Second Corps on the morning of the 16th of June was Hancock's ignorance of the Confederate position at Petersburg. Until he received Grant's despatch at 5:30 P.M. of the 15th he had not had an intimation that any responsibility concerning the capture of Petersburg was to devolve on him; he had never previously served in the region in which Petersburg was situated; the only map of the country furnished him had proved grossly wrong, placing Harrison's Creek several miles out of its true position; he had come up on the evening of the 15th, only intent on offering to Smith a loyal support. Before his divisions were fairly in line of battle, night had fallen. Finally, it must, in fairness, be confessed that topographical insight was not one of Hancock's strong points. On a field of battle over which he could cast his rapid and searching glance, no man surpassed—few soldiers, living or dead, ever equalled—the commander of the Second Corps in the promptitude and directness with which he made appropriate dispositions, whether for attack or for defence, however sharp and sudden the emergency. Even in a region which his eye could not scan, but of which a good map was available, Hancock's well-trained and well-stored mind rarely failed to suggest the proper means of meeting the movements of the enemy or of pursuing his own initiative. But of that faculty of topographical insight, one peculiar form of genius which enables some men, even in a strange coun-

try, to know instinctively the direction of roads, "the lay of the land," the course of streams, the trend of ranges—all upon indications so slight and subtle as to escape the observation of men ordinarily gifted—of this rare, but, in a commander or staff-officer, most useful faculty Hancock possessed little.

For one or another reason it came about that General Hancock's orders to his division commanders, about midnight, to govern their actions in the morning of the 16th of June, threw upon them much responsibility; not more responsibility than is appropriate to the leader of five or seven thousand men; but more than Hancock's habits as a corps commander had usually assigned them. The orders were addressed in the following terms to Generals Gibbon and Birney, Barlow's division not having yet got into place after its misdirection toward City Point the evening previous: "If there are any points on your front commanding your position, now occupied by the enemy, the commanding general directs that they be taken at or before daylight, preferably before, as it is desirable to prevent the enemy from holding any points between us and the Appomattox. It is thought that there are one or two such points." These orders were delivered to the division commanders between one and two o'clock.

Morgan, in his narrative, criticizes General Birney for his failure to seize the high ground about the Avery House on his front. Morgan states that he rode out, after daylight, from Birney's division toward the Avery House, without finding any pickets from that division until he came close to the enemy, then hurrying down from Petersburg to throw themselves into such of their redoubts opposite our left as had been by them abandoned in consequence of Smith's capture of other portions of the line the night before. No vigorous effort

appears to have been made at daylight to carry out Hancock's instructions to seize all commanding points in front. It was between seven and eight o'clock before Birney's troops fairly got to work. By this time much ground, particularly that around the Hare and Avery Houses, which should have been within our picket line, and could have been had for nothing at daybreak, was occupied by the enemy, who immediately proceeded to man the abandoned redoubts and to connect and strengthen them. At eight o'clock Egan led his brigade in a brilliant assault upon one of the Confederate redoubts (Redan No. 12), carrying it in the very style which he had displayed on the North Anna. In the assault Egan was wounded, but not severely. Birney was unable to carry his success far, and was obliged to leave the enemy in possession of a position which was to be taken later, at great cost of life.

Barlow's division was now up on our extreme left; and the Ninth Corps was reported close behind, on the road. General Hancock received orders from General Meade to assume command of all the troops at Petersburg, and to make a reconnoissance to develop the enemy's line and ascertain the most suitable place for a general assault, which it was proposed to deliver at six o'clock in the afternoon. The reconnoissance was made by Birney's division on the left of the Prince George Court House Road, bringing on a very animated skirmish, with heavy fire of artillery. General Meade himself arrived while it was in progress, and decided that the assault should be directed against the Hare House, in Birney's front. The artillery fire and the skirmishing continued until the appointed hour arrived. The burden of the attack fell upon Barlow's and Birney's divisions. Gibbon's troops were, however, engaged; and

two brigades of the Eighteenth Corps and two of the Ninth were used as supports. Barlow and Birney were unable to break the enemy's line, now reinforced by the veteran troops of Lee's army, though ground was gained and held, three redoubts (Redans 3, 13, and 14) being captured, with their connecting works. General Barlow led one of his assaults cap in hand; and he was bravely seconded by his staff and leading officers. Here was killed the gallant Patrick Kelly, Colonel of the Eighty-eighth New York, commanding the Irish Brigade. Here, too, fell, severely wounded, Colonel James A. Beaver, commanding Barlow's Fourth Brigade, the third commander who had fallen at its head within two weeks.

Lieutenant-Colonel Baird, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York, whose gallantry and address at Morton's Ford on the 6th of February have been noted, lost his life in this assault. Colonel John A. Savage, who had succeeded Haskell in the command of the Thirty-sixth Wisconsin, was also killed. It is not possible to state definitely the losses of the 16th of June.

The following officers, besides Colonels Kelly, Baird, and Savage, were killed or mortally wounded:

Captain George S. Dawson, Second New York Heavy Artillery.

Captain James A. Lothian, Twenty-sixth Michigan.

Captain Bernard S. O'Neil, Sixty-ninth New York.

Captain M. Mullery, Seventh New Jersey.

Captain Sydney M. Layton, Eleventh New Jersey.

Captain Thomas Hart and Lieutenant John Nolan, One Hundred and Fifty-fifth New York.

Captain Robert M. Jeffries, One Hundred and Fiftieth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Charles L. Yearsley, Seventh New York Heavy Artillery.

Lieutenant Walter P. Wright, Eighth New York Heavy Artillery.

Lieutenant George R. Shapleigh, Fifth New Hampshire.

Lieutenant Michael J. Egan, One Hundred and Seventieth New York.

Lieutenant James Shuter, Fortieth New York.

Lieutenants George A. Bryan and Isaac De Witt Coleman, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York.

Lieutenant John A. McDonald, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York.

Lieutenant James R. Wingate, Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania.

After night fell the Confederates made several attempts to recover the captured redoubts ; but were beaten off with loss. The intrenchments were "turned" for use against those who had constructed them, and were closely connected with those captured by General Smith on the 15th.

THE 17TH OF JUNE.

We have seen how, on the 15th, the golden opportunity to seize Petersburg was lost. We have seen how, on the 16th, the late arrival of Barlow's division, owing to its loss of the road on the preceding afternoon, and the lack of enterprise on the part of another division commander during the first hours of daylight, allowed the enemy, so completely discomfited the evening before, to seize and fortify strong and well-advanced positions, such as those at the Hare and Avery Houses. We saw how, at eight o'clock in the morning, Egan repeated his brilliant *coup* of the North Anna; and how, toward evening, the Second Corps, supported by brigades from the Eighteenth and Ninth, made a general assault which

resulted in forcing back the enemy and capturing three more of their redans, but without success corresponding to the heavy loss sustained.

At daybreak of the 17th Potter's division, comprising the veteran troops of the Ninth Corps, by a most gallant and brilliant assault captured the enemy's lines at the Shind, or Shand, House, with guns, colors, and prisoners. Encouraged by this success the Ninth Corps made other assaults, two of which were supported by Barlow's division on the right. In the last of these, which took place about dark and continued until ten o'clock, Barlow was fully engaged and lost heavily, especially in men captured. A portion of the enemy's works was for a brief time occupied, but was retaken.

It is impossible to state, or even approximate, the losses of this day. The officers killed or mortally wounded in the Second Corps were :

Lieutenant-Colonel Willard W. Bates, Eighth New York Heavy Artillery.

Major William A. Kirk and Augustus M. Wright, Fifty-seventh New York.

Captain D. K. Smith Jones, Fourth New York Heavy Artillery.

Captain Benjamin C. Pennell, Seventeenth Maine.

Captain David H. Ginder, Eighty-first Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant James E. Bullis, Sixty-sixth New York.

Lieutenant Henry M. Adams, Fifty-seventh Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Isidor Hirsch, Ninety-ninth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Miles McDonald, Sixty-third New York.

Lieutenant Andrew M. Purdy, One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania.

THE 18TH OF JUNE.

The morning of this day found General Meade in a state of mind to demand the most strenuous and persistent assaults, with a view to carry, if possible, at any cost, the lines of the enemy defending Petersburg. Had such a temper presided over the operations of the 15th or the 16th, it is safe to assert, with what we now know, that Petersburg would have been occupied by the Union forces; but the time that had elapsed had permitted Lee heavily to reinforce Beauregard, and had enabled the latter officer, still charged with the defence, to construct a strong interior line of works, against which our troops were vainly to be hurled, making the 18th of June one of the bloody days of the Army of the Potomac.

Most inopportunately it happened that Hancock had become at this date completely disabled. Fragments of bone, splintered at Gettysburg, had been for the past few days, as already stated, making their way to the surface; and after the close of the action of the 17th the gallant general had been obliged to relinquish his command to Birney. The history of the succeeding day can never be fully written, since no official report regarding it was ever made; and thus, although the operations were of sufficient magnitude to justify a detailed account, only general and vague statements can be given.

At daybreak General Birney pushed forward a strong skirmish line, on both the right and the left of the Prince George Court House Road, and found that the enemy had withdrawn from the positions they held the night before to a new line beyond the Hare House. On sending this information with a prisoner from Hoke's division, Birney received the following despatch:

HEADQUARTERS OF THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,
7 A.M., June 18th.

MAJOR-GENERAL BIRNEY: I have received your despatch and Hoke's man. There is every reason to believe the enemy have no regularly fortified line between the one abandoned and Petersburg; but if time is given them they will make one. I have moved the whole army forward, and directed the commanding officers on your right and left to communicate with you. It is of great importance the enemy should be pressed, and, if possible, forced across the Appomattox. I cannot ascertain there is any force in our front but Beauregard's, consisting of Hoke's, Ransom's, and Johnson's (Bushrod) divisions. They cannot be over thirty thousand, and we have fifty-five thousand. If we can engage them before they are fortified we ought to whip them.

GEORGE G. MEADE.

General Meade's information regarding the force of the enemy was accurate at the date of the despatch; but it was the fortune of the Potomac Army that Field's and Kershaw's divisions should arrive before the first assault could be delivered, followed, during the afternoon, by the troops of A. P. Hill. The corps on the left of the Second had a long distance to traverse before reaching the enemy's new line, and were consequently late in getting at their work; but between ten and eleven General Birney had developed the works in his front, and reported to General Meade that the Confederate position was strong, and that artillery could not assist in the attack; but that he was ready to assault as soon as the Eighteenth Corps, on his right, should be ready to co-operate. General Meade, in reply, directed that the attack be made precisely at noon; that the column of assault be strong, well supported, and vigorously pushed, the troops to advance without firing until they should penetrate the enemy's line.

Promptly on the minute, Gibbon's division was



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thrown forward in two lines of battle, but was repulsed, General Pierce, commanding brigade, being wounded. Feeling himself strongly urged by the tone of General Meade's previous despatches, General Birney, in communicating the result, expressed his purpose to renew the assault. In reply he received the following: "You will attack again, as you propose, with the least possible delay. The order of attack this morning required strong columns of assault. Please conform to this. General Martindale¹ is about advancing again, and needs your co-operation. Select your own point of attack, but do not lose any time in examination."

At a later hour General Birney received the following: "I have sent a positive order to Generals Burnside and Warren to attack at all hazards with their whole force. I find it useless to appoint an hour to effect co-operation, and I am therefore compelled to give you the same order. You have a large corps, powerful and numerous; and I beg you will at once, as soon as possible, assault in a strong column. The day is fast going, and I wish the practicability of carrying the enemy's line settled before dark."

In obedience to these urgent instructions, General Birney formed the division of Mott, supported by one of Gibbon's brigades and by the division of Barlow, on the left, and made a strenuous assault, which was repulsed with terrible slaughter. Colonel John Ramsey, Eighth New Jersey, commanding brigade, was severely wounded. The attack of Mott, from the Hare House, was especially memorable on account of the heroic bearing and monstrous losses of the First Maine Heavy Artillery, which that general, determined to try what virtue there might

¹ Commanding two divisions of the Eighteenth Corps.

be in the enthusiasm of a new, fresh, strong regiment, not yet discouraged by repeated failures, had placed in his front line. The older regiments advanced in support of the heavy artillery, to take advantage of its success should it penetrate the enemy's works. The charge was a most gallant one, though unsuccessful, the Maine men advancing over a space of three hundred and fifty yards swept by musketry, and only retiring after more than six hundred of their number had fallen, the heaviest loss sustained by any regiment of the Union armies in any battle of the war.

Thus ended the last of the great series of assaults upon intrenched positions. At five o'clock General Meade had become satisfied that it was impracticable to carry the enemy's lines; but his last despatch shows how firmly he had set his soul upon the attempt.

"Sorry to hear you could not carry the works. Get the best line you can, and be prepared to hold it. I suppose you cannot make any more attacks, and I feel satisfied that all has been done that can be done."

The commissioned officers killed or mortally wounded had been:

Lieutenant-Colonel Guy H. Watkins, One Hundred and Forty-first Pennsylvania.

Major Edwin L. Blake, Eighth New York Heavy Artillery.

Captains Frederick C. Howes, Samuel W. Daggett, A. J. Jacquith, and Lieutenants Allen E. Barry, James E. Hall, G. H. Ruggles, Thomas A. Drummond, Albert G. Abbott, Samuel W. Crowell, Edward S. Forster, H. N. Spooner, and James W. Clark, all of the First Maine Heavy Artillery.

Captain William A. Berry, Second New York Heavy Artillery.

Captain William A. Jackson, One Hundred and Twenty-fourth New York.

Captain Isaac Morehead, Sixty-third Pennsylvania.

Captain H. H. Woolsey, Fifth New Jersey.

Captain E. A. Galloway, Thirty-sixth Wisconsin.

Captain William A. Norton, One Hundred and Tenth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant A. B. Stanton, Eighty-sixth New York.

Lieutenant Martin V. Stanton, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York.

Lieutenant Matthew N. Heiskell, Ninety-ninth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Clark M. Lyons, Fifty-seventh Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Samuel G. Gilbreth, Andrew Sharpshooters (Fifteenth Massachusetts).

Lieutenant Lafayette Carver, Nineteenth Maine.

Lieutenant William F. Dutton, One Hundred and Eighth New York, was killed on June 20th.

THE 22D OF JUNE.

After the failure of the assaults of the 18th the Second Corps was withdrawn from the front and massed in rear of the left centre of the general line. Although nominally "in reserve," the troops did not found on this fact any great expectations of a long rest, for the corps had never forgotten the remark of a member of the Irish Brigade on the occasion when Caldwell formed his division in a line of battalions in mass, behind Sickles, at Gettysburg, and the men were told that they were to be in reserve. "In resarve; yis, resarved for the heavy fightin'." This remark, emphasized as it was by Caldwell's experience in the wheat-field, had become proverbial in the Second Corps, and accordingly the troops were little surprised

when, on the morning of the 21st, they found themselves on the march across the Norfolk Railroad and the Jerusalem Plank Road. Advancing then to the front the corps took up Warren's line, and extended it to the left, this being the first of that series of southward extensions which had for their object the cutting of the Weldon Railroad.

In the new position Barlow's division held the left, pushing forward to within two miles of the Weldon Road and skirmishing sharply with the Confederate cavalry. During the night of the 21st the Sixth Corps came up on the left of the Second, in anticipation of a united forward movement on the morrow.

We have now to record perhaps the most humiliating episode in the experience of the Second Corps down to this time. The commanding and staff officers of the corps were never able to see that the disaster to be described was altogether the fault of the corps, though it must be confessed that, but for the hideous losses of the fifty preceding days, now aggregating nearly twenty thousand, the Confederates might have found it dangerous to go "fooling" around the flank of the Second Corps in the fashion they did.

The disaster referred to occurred in this wise : The two corps engaged in the forward movement had been directed to maintain close connection with each other. The Second Corps moved forward, pivoting its right on the left of the Fifth Corps, and advancing its own left as rapidly as the right of the Sixth Corps could be got to move. The latter, however, having the greater distance to traverse in the wheeling movement, was so long detained that General Meade became impatient, and ordered General Birney to advance without any regard to the Sixth Corps. Now it happened that at the very moment this

order was given, the enemy were feeling the right of the Sixth Corps line; and as Birney swung forward the Second Corps, he left this force in his rear. Barlow, who held the left flank, apprehensive of trouble from this source, moved his left brigade by the flank, ready to form line fronting southward. More extensive preparation did not seem necessary, as it was assumed that the Sixth Corps, pushing vigorously forward, would soon be up. At three o'clock, however, the Sixth Corps being still behind, Barlow's left was thrown into confusion by a sharp attack of the enemy in great force. The flanking brigade gave way and the front line, finding itself exposed, fell hastily back, though in order, to evade the flank attack. No sooner had Barlow halted his line than the enemy attacked in front, but were thrown off by Miles' brigade.

So far nothing serious had happened; but the enemy followed up their initial advantage with an enterprise, audacity and shrewdness rarely exhibited, even by their able commanders. As the falling back of each body of troops in succession uncovered the left flank of the one next to it, this was sharply clipped by the Confederate column. When the flank of Gibbon was reached, a resolute attack upon his front, coinciding with that upon his left, drove his line back in some disorder, due to the suddenness rather than the severity of the assault. Four guns of McKnight's Twelfth New York Battery were left in the enemy's hands.

The whole affair was over in a very short time. Nothing but the extraordinary quickness and precision of the Confederate movements on this occasion would have made such a result possible. The Second Corps had been defeated almost without being engaged. There had been very little fighting, and comparatively small loss, ex-

cept in prisoners. Of these the Second Corps had lost seventeen hundred : more than it had on the Peninsula ; more than it had at Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville combined. Four guns, moreover, the only ones ever taken from the Second Corps by the enemy, except that abandoned, disabled, on the banks of the Po, were the trophies of the Confederate triumph. The whole operation had been like that of an expert mechanic who touches some critical point with a fine instrument, in exactly the right way, producing an effect seemingly altogether out of proportion to the force exerted. The enemy's success was of course facilitated, if not, indeed, alone made possible, by the thickets through which our troops were moving, and by their own intimate knowledge of the ground.

Even as it was it would have been possible, by a vigorous movement, to retake McKnight's guns, but the officer commanding that immediate portion of our line, although in general a spirited and aggressive soldier, on this occasion hesitated until time had been given the enemy to draw the battery off the ground. Moreover, General Birney, deeply impressed with the responsibility of his new charge, apprehended that the attack already experienced was but the beginning of a general assault upon his corps, and gave his first attention to preparations for battle. The Confederates showed no disposition to follow up their initial advantage, gained through surprise, and returned at dusk to their former position.

On the morning of the 23d the Second and Sixth Corps were directed by General Meade to attack the enemy in their front ; but the Confederates were found to have withdrawn to their works, and the order for attack was countermanded. The officers killed or mortally wounded, during the affair of the 22d, were :

Captain Morris Brown, Jr., One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York.

Captain Jacob B. Edmunds, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania.

Captain Joseph W. Kimball, First Massachusetts Heavy Artillery.

Lieutenant M. B. Miller, adjutant, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York.

Lieutenant Albert J. Dwight, One Hundred and Fifty-fifth New York.

Lieutenant Francis H. Seeley, One Hundred and Seventieth New York.

In the large number of prisoners were the remains of several of the original regiments of the corps, notably the Fifteenth Massachusetts, which, after losing three hundred and eighteen men, had emerged from the woods about Dunker Church, September 17, 1862, bearing not only its own but a Confederate color, but which now, a mere handful, was captured, almost entire, with its tattered flag.

On June 23d Colonel William Blaisdell, Eleventh Massachusetts, who had greatly distinguished himself at the Salient on May 12th, was killed on the skirmish line.

Lieutenant S. F. Lincoln, adjutant, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York, was mortally wounded, June 26th.

On the 27th of June General Hancock had sufficiently recovered from his disabilities to resume command of the corps.

CHAPTER XX.

NUMBERS AND ORGANIZATION, JUNE 30, 1864.

It is now time to take a survey of the Second Corps as it lay in the intrenchments of Petersburg, June 30, 1864; and to note the effects produced upon its aggregate numbers and upon its constituents by the experiences of the six months that had elapsed since the opening of the year.

The following table shows the numbers of the Second Corps according to each monthly return from January to June, inclusive. The great increase in all the items between February 29th and March 31st is, of course, due to the accession of the two divisions of the Third Corps. The still further increase between April 30th and May 31st, in spite of the enormous number of the killed, is due to the accession of the heavy artillery, the Corcoran Legion, and other reinforcements.

| Date. | Present for duty. | On extra or daily duty. | Present for duty or on extra or daily duty. | Sick. | In arrest. | Total present. | Absent. | Aggregate present and absent. |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---|-------|------------|----------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1864. | | | | | | | | |
| January 31st | 10,427 | 565 | 10,992 | 642 | 85 | 11,719 | 10,464 | 22,183 |
| February 29th | 11,203 | 632 | 11,835 | 745 | 68 | 12,648 | 10,798 | 23,446 |
| March 31st | 23,877 | 4,422 | 28,299 | 1,278 | 152 | 29,729 | 13,306 | 43,035 |
| April 30th | 28,854 | 1,055 | 29,909 | 1,641 | 185 | 31,735 | 14,628 | 46,363 |
| May 31st | 26,980 | 3,394 | 30,374 | 731 | 48 | 31,153 | 22,678 | 53,861 |
| June 30th | 17,201 | 4,369 | 21,570 | 988 | 55 | 22,613 | 27,045 | 49,658 |

The following table shows the foregoing figures reduced to percentages :

| Date. | Present for duty. | On extra or daily duty. | Present for duty or on extra or daily duty. | Sick or in arrest. | Total present. | Absent. | Aggregate present and absent. |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1864. | | | | | | | |
| January 31st | 47.00 | 2.55 | 49.55 | 3.28 | 52.83 | 47.17 | 100 |
| February 29th ... | 47.78 | 2.70 | 50.48 | 3.47 | 53.95 | 46.05 | 100 |
| March 31st | 55.48 | 10.28 | 65.76 | 3.32 | 69.08 | 30.92 | 100 |
| April 30th | 62.23 | 2.28 | 64.51 | 3.94 | 68.45 | 31.55 | 100 |
| May 31st | 50.12 | 6.31 | 56.43 | 1.45 | 57.88 | 42.12 | 100 |
| June 30th | 34.64 | 8.80 | 43.44 | 2.09 | 45.53 | 54.47 | 100 |

Here we have the proportion of the aggregate numbers of the corps present for duty, or on extra or daily duty, reduced from 64.51 per cent. on the 30th of April, to 56.43 on the 31st of May, and still further, to 43.44 on the 30th of June, as the result of sixty days of almost continuous marching and fighting.

The organization of the corps on the 30th of June was as follows :

THE CORPS, Major-General WINFIELD S. HANCOCK, commanding.

THE ARTILLERY BRIGADE, Major JOHN G. HAZARD commanding: 14 batteries; 56 guns: Third Battalion, Fourth New York Heavy Artillery.

FIRST DIVISION, Brigadier-General FRANCIS C. BARLOW, commanding.

First Brigade, Brigadier-General N. A. Miles, commanding: Sixty-first New York; Second New York Heavy Artillery; Eighty-first, One Hundred and Fortieth, One Hundred and Eighty-third Pennsylvania; Twenty-sixth Michigan; Fifth New Hampshire; Twenty-eighth Massachusetts.

Consolidated Second and Third Brigades, Colonel C.

D. McDougall, commanding: Seventh (detachment), Thirty-ninth, Fifty-second, Fifty-seventh, Sixty-third, Sixty-ninth, Eighty-eighth, One Hundred and Eleventh, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York.

Fourth Brigade, Lieutenant-Colonel John Hastings, commanding: Fifty-third, One Hundred and Sixteenth, One Hundred and Forty-fifth, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania; Second Delaware; Sixty-fourth, Sixty-sixth New York; Seventh New York Heavy Artillery.

SECOND DIVISION, Major-General JOHN GIBBON, commanding.

First Brigade,¹ Lieutenant-Colonel F. E. Pierce, commanding: Seventh Michigan; Nineteenth Maine; Fifteenth, Nineteenth, Twentieth Massachusetts; One Hundred and Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania; Forty-second, Fifty-ninth, Eighty-second, One Hundred and Fifty-second New York; Thirty-sixth Wisconsin; First Minnesota.

Second Brigade,² One Hundred and Fifty-fifth, One Hundred and Sixty-fourth, One Hundred and Seventieth New York; Eighth New York Heavy Artillery; Sixty-ninth New York Militia (One Hundred and Eighty-second Volunteers).

Third Brigade, Colonel Thomas A. Smyth, commanding: Fourteenth Connecticut; First Delaware; Seventh West Virginia; Twelfth New Jersey; Tenth, One Hundred and Eighth New York; Sixty-ninth, Seventy-second, One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania; Fourth Ohio.

¹ General A. S. Webb absent, wounded.

² General R. O. Tyler absent, wounded.

THIRD DIVISION, Major-General D. B. BIRNEY, commanding.

First Brigade, Colonel H. J. Madill, commanding: Seventeenth Maine; Fortieth, Eighty-sixth, One Hundred and Twenty-fourth New York; First Battalion Fourth New York Heavy Artillery; Twentieth Indiana; Ninety-ninth, One Hundred and Tenth, One Hundred and Forty-first Pennsylvania; Second United States Sharpshooters.

Second Brigade, Brigadier-General B. R. Pierce, commanding: Fifth Michigan; Fifty-seventh, Sixty-third, One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania; Ninety-third New York¹; Second Battalion Fourth New York Heavy Artillery; First United States Sharpshooters; First Massachusetts Heavy Artillery.

Third Brigade, Brigadier-General Gershom Mott, commanding: Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, Eighth, Eleventh New Jersey; Sixteenth Massachusetts; First Maine Heavy Artillery.

Fourth Brigade, Colonel William R. Brewster, commanding: Seventy-first, Seventy-second (three companies), Seventy-third, Seventy-fourth, One Hundred and Twentieth New York; Eleventh Massachusetts; Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania.

Examination of this roster shows that the veteran Fifth New Hampshire and First Minnesota had returned to their old command, after absence to be recruited.

Since the beginning of the campaign the following regiments had joined: Thirty-sixth Wisconsin; One Hundred and Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania; the regi-

¹ By an accidental omission the accession of this regiment in April, as a substitute for the One Hundred and Fourteenth Pennsylvania (see page 403, foot-note), detached as guard at General Meade's Headquarters, was not noted in the appropriate place.

ments of the Corcoran Legion (One Hundred and Fifty-fifth, One Hundred and Sixty-fourth, and One Hundred and Seventieth New York, and Sixty-ninth New York Militia); and the regiments of heavy artillery brought down by General Tyler (First Maine, First Massachusetts, Second, Seventh, and Eighth New York): in all, six regiments of infantry and five of heavy artillery.

The following regiments had been lost to the command:

First Massachusetts, mustered out: N. B. McLaughlin, Colonel; Clark B. Baldwin, Lieutenant-Colonel; Gardner Walker, Major.

Seventy-first Pennsylvania, mustered out: Richard Penn Smith, Colonel; Charles Kochersperger, Lieutenant-Colonel. The veterans¹ and recruits of this regiment were transferred to the Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania.

Third Michigan,² mustered out; veterans and recruits formed into four companies and attached to the Fifth Michigan.

Twenty-sixth Pennsylvania, mustered out: Robert L. Bodine, Lieutenant-Colonel; Samuel G. Moffett, Major; veterans and recruits to the Ninety-ninth Pennsylvania.

Fourteenth Indiana, mustered out: E. H. C. Cavins, Lieutenant-Colonel; Wm. Houghton, Major; veterans and recruits to the Twentieth Indiana.

Fourth Ohio, mustered out: Leonard W. Carpenter, Colonel; Gordon A. Stewart, Lieutenant-Colonel.

Eighth Ohio, mustered out: Franklin Sawyer, Lieutenant-Colonel; Albert H. Winslow, Major.

The veterans and recruits of these two heroic Ohio

¹ This term is officially used to designate those who had re-enlisted after completing one term of service.

² A regiment under the same name was subsequently raised by Colonel Houghton, and saw service in the Southwest.

regiments were organized into the Fourth Battalion of Ohio Volunteers, Frank J. Spalter, Lieutenant-Colonel, commanding.

Seventieth New York, mustered out: J. Egbert Farnum, Colonel; Thomas Holt, Lieutenant-Colonel; Daniel Mahen, Major; veterans and recruits to the Eighty-sixth New York.

Third Maine, mustered out: Moses B. Lakeman, Colonel; veterans and recruits to the Seventeenth Maine.

Fourth Maine, mustered out: Elijah Walker, Colonel; George G. Davis, Lieutenant-Colonel; veterans and recruits to the Nineteenth Maine.

Another regiment disappeared from the roster of the corps during this period, namely, the One Hundred and Fifteenth Pennsylvania, which was on the 22d of June consolidated with the One Hundred and Tenth Pennsylvania, Lieutenant-Colonel John P. Dunn and Major William A. Reilly being discharged as supernumeraries.

The changes among the field officers of the corps during the months of May and June had been numerous.

DISCHARGED.—In March: Colonel Arthur F. Devereux, Nineteenth Massachusetts; Colonel Judson Farrar Twenty-sixth Michigan, Major Henry M. Alles, Seventy-fourth New York. In April: Colonel Turner G. Morehead and Major John H. Stover, One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania. In May: Lieutenant-Colonel Enos C. Brooks, Sixty-fourth New York; Major Charles C. Baker, Thirty-ninth New York; In June: Colonel Benjamin Higgins, Eighty-sixth New York; Colonel Norman J. Hall, Seventh Michigan; Major James H. Hinman, One Hundred and Eleventh New York.

Of the foregoing officers, Colonels Devereux, Morehead, and Hall had earned specially honorable distinction by their long service in the Second Corps. Captain

William A. Arnold, Battery A, First Rhode Island, was also discharged in June.

RESIGNED.—In March : Major Thomas C. Harkness, Eighty-first Pennsylvania. In April : Colonel James M. Bull, One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York ; Lieutenant-Colonel Isaac M. Lusk, One Hundred and Eleventh New York. In May : Colonel William P. Bailey, Second Delaware ; Lieutenant-Colonel William Powell and Major John Reynolds, One Hundred and Eighty-third Pennsylvania. In June : Lieutenant-Colonel Henry W. Cunningham, Nineteenth Maine.

MUSTERED OUT (on expiration of term of service).—Major James W. McDonald, Eleventh Massachusetts.

PROMOTED.—Colonels Nelson A. Miles, Sixty-first New York ; John R. Brooke, Fifty-third Pennsylvania ; S. Sprigg Carroll, Eighth Ohio, to be Brigadier-Generals of Volunteers.

DISMISSED THE SERVICE.—Colonel Asher S. Leidy, Ninety-ninth Pennsylvania (April 9th) ; Major James F. Ryan, Sixty-third Pennsylvania (April 12th) ; and Colonel H. W. Hudson, Eighty-second New York (May 20th).

During the month of June Brigadier-General Gibbon had received his well-earned promotion to be Major-General of Volunteers.

CHAPTER XXI.

DEEP BOTTOM.

THE terrible experiences of May and June in assaults on intrenched positions ; assaults made, often, not at a carefully selected point, but " all along the line ; " assaults made as if it were a good thing to assault, and not a dire necessity ; assaults made without an adequate concentration of troops, often without time for careful preparation, sometimes even without examination of the ground—these bitter experiences had naturally brought about a reaction, by which efforts to outflank the enemy were to become the order of the day, so that the months of July and August were largely to be occupied in rapid movements, now to the right and now to the left of a line thirty to forty miles in length, in the hope of somewhere, at some time, getting upon the flank of the unprepared enemy—the sentiment of headquarters, and perhaps the orders,¹ being adverse to assaults. Unfortunately this change of purpose did not take place until the numbers and *morale* of the troops had been so far reduced that the flanking movements became, in the main, ineffectual from the want of vigor in attack, at the critical moments, when a little of the fire which had been exhibited in the great assaults of May would have sufficed to crown a well-conceived enterprise with a glorious victory. But that fire

¹ Thus General Grant's despatch to Meade, July 27th, says : " I do not want Hancock to attack intrenched lines."

had for the time burned itself out; and on more than one occasion during the months of July and August, 1864, the troops of the Army of the Potomac, after an all-day or all-night march which had placed them in a position of advantage, failed to show a trace of that enthusiasm and *élan* which characterized the earlier days of the campaign. This result was not due to moral causes only. Physically the troops were dead-beat, from the exertions and privations¹ of the preceding two months. Men died of flesh-wounds which, at another time, would merely have afforded a welcome excuse for a thirty days' sick-leave. The limit of human endurance had been reached.

But more even than the effect of excessive labors, more even than the effects of discouragement, were the effects of the shattering of that Organization which makes an army differ from a promiscuous collection of the same number of men, possessing the same moral and physical qualities. In the Second Corps, more than twenty officers had already been killed or wounded in command of brigades; nearly one hundred in command of regiments. Nearly seventeen thousand men had fallen under the fire of the enemy, and among these was an undue proportion of the choicest spirits. It was the bravest captain, the bravest sergeant, the bravest private, who went farthest to the fore and staid longest under fire. Had the men who fell at Cold Harbor, alone, been with their colors during the months of July and August, victory would, on more than one occasion, have been the lot of the Second Corps, instead of failure or even defeat.

On the 9th of July the Sixth Corps was withdrawn

¹ For over a month the army had had no vegetables, and the beef used was from cattle which were exhausted by a long march through a country scantily provided with forage.—Humphreys', Campaign of 1864-65.

from the Army of the Potomac and despatched in haste to Washington, to meet the invasion of Early, whom Lee, knowing well that the army in front of him had largely lost its initiative, had sent northward in the same spirit which prompted the invasion of Maryland after the defeat of Pope, and the invasion of Pennsylvania after the defeat of Hooker.

On the 11th of July the Second Corps was withdrawn from its intrenchments and massed near the Williams House; and the following day went into camp behind the Fifth Corps, General Hancock making his headquarters in the shot-riddled building on the Norfolk Road known as "The Deserted House." Here the troops were destined to remain undisturbed for more than a fortnight.

On the 18th of July Brigadier-Generals J. H. Hobart Ward and Joshua T. Owen were mustered out, by order of the President. These officers had for some time been awaiting trial on charges of misconduct during the early part of the campaign; but it had not been found convenient to assemble a court martial of sufficient rank.

A change in the *personnel* of a very different character occurred when, on the 23d of July, Major General Birney gave up his division, to take charge of the Tenth Corps, in the Army of the James, for which position he had been recommended by Generals Hancock and Meade. General Birney had rendered marked services to the Army of the Potomac. He was eminently a sagacious man; and had an excellent understanding of military principles. In temper he was signally cool and composed. So far as the closest observation could discover, his mental processes were not a bit less steady and equable in the heat of action and under the severest fire than of "a summer's evening in his tent." Among the officers of

the army, generally, he was reputed somewhat cold and strongly ambitious. If as a commander he was lacking in anything, it was in "creature pugnacity," the capacity for getting thoroughly angry when struck. This, more than anything else, was the element lacking in McClellan's composition; and a dash more of animal satisfaction in drawing blood would have improved the soldierly quality of Birney. Taken all in all, he was one of our most successful generals from civil life.

Shortly before General Birney's departure from the Second Corps, he sustained a severe personal loss in the death, from disease, of his brother and Assistant Adjutant-General, Major Fitzhugh Birney, a gallant and accomplished officer.

General Birney was succeeded in the command of his division by General Mott, a very genial gentleman, perfectly brave, with much of the natural instinct of leadership, lacking perhaps in that stirring ambition which brings into their highest activity the qualities of a commander, but withal one who, as man or soldier, is never to be mentioned without respect.

THE FIRST DEEP BOTTOM.

On the 26th of July the Second Corps was directed, in co-operation with the cavalry, to initiate a movement the account of which needs to be introduced by a brief survey of the general situation. The Army of the Potomac, reduced by the detachment of the Sixth Corps, at this time lay in front of Petersburg, its right on the Appomattox, its left extending to the Weldon Railroad. Actual siege operations had been begun against Petersburg on the 9th of July, the siege artillery being placed under command of that distinguished of-



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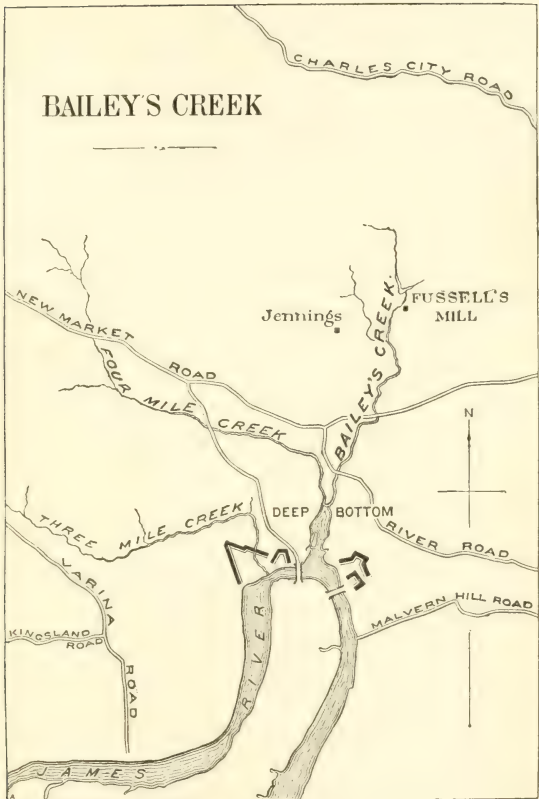
ficer, General Henry L. Abbott. Upon the front of Burnside's corps, opposite the town, the Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, a regiment raised in the coal and iron district of that State, had run a tunnel out to the enemy's line, and had prepared a mine underneath the Confederate work known as Elliott's Salient. The tract between the Appomattox and the James on the north, known as Bermuda Hundred, was occupied by Butler's troops of the Army of the James. Butler had laid two bridges over the James River at Deep Bottom, the bridge heads being held by a brigade under General Foster.

General Grant's plan was, that the Second Corps, making an all-night march across Bermuda Hundred, in rear of Butler, should cross the bridges over the James and break the enemy's line, which was not supposed to be held by any considerable force, driving the Confederates back to Chapin's Bluff. In the event of Hancock's success, Sheridan was then to push across the James, and attempt Richmond by a sudden dash. If, however, as was most probable, the works defending the city were too strongly held to allow its capture, Sheridan was to proceed to the north of Richmond, and thoroughly destroy the two railroads on that side as far as the Anna rivers. He was reinforced by Kautz's cavalry division, from the Army of the James. Should Sheridan find Richmond practicable, he was to be supported by the Second Corps.

There was still another object in Grant's view, namely, that Hancock's movement to the north of the James might draw away from Petersburg a large part of its defenders, and prepare the way for exploding Burnside's mine. Out of all these possibilities it seemed as if something of good must be secured by the contemplated movement.

In pursuance of these instructions, the Second Corps left its camp on the afternoon of the 26th, and, at two o'clock on the morning of the 27th, the head of column reached Deep Bottom. The bridges across the James at this point were two, one above and one below the mouth of Bailey's Creek. This creek is about five miles long, running due south to the James. In its course it crosses three important roads. These are the Derbytoun or Central Road (which it crosses at Fussell's Mill) and the Long Bridge and River Roads, the latter two running into the Newmarket Road beyond the creek. From the line of the creek to Richmond is about twelve miles.

It was General Grant's plan that the infantry should cross the upper bridge and move at once on Chapin's Bluff, while the cavalry, crossing by the lower bridge, should be making its way toward Richmond. When, however, General Hancock arrived at Foster's headquarters, he ascertained that the enemy had drawn a line of works around the upper bridge, which were held in considerable force. As it seemed undesirable that the movement which had been entered upon should begin, and perhaps end, with an assault, General Hancock reported the situation, by telegraph, to General Meade, who authorized the infantry to cross by the lower bridge, the cavalry to await their turn. This, however, created a very different situation from that which had been contemplated. It placed Bailey's Creek between Hancock and his objective point, Chapin's Bluff. Should the stream be found to afford a good natural line of defence, a force which could not have fought Hancock an hour on the other side of the creek might be enabled to resist him, on this line, long enough to defeat the first purpose of the expedition. Hancock, on his part, appreciating the situation, sought to cross his troops rapidly and to



push them vigorously up the course of the stream, with a view to secure, if not one, then another of its crossings. General Foster, meanwhile, undertook to threaten the enemy holding the works over against the upper bridge, and thus prevent their being detached to move up the creek.

On crossing the infantry by the lower bridge, Hancock discovered a force, belonging to Kershaw's division, occupying, with artillery, a line of breast-works on the east of the creek.

The skirmishers of the Third Division, consisting of the Ninety-ninth and One Hundred and Tenth Pennsylvania, were thrown out the Newmarket and Malvern Hill Road, where they became so sharply engaged with the enemy as to require these regiments to be reinforced by the Seventy-third New York. Both the Ninety-ninth and One Hundred and Tenth suffered severely in this encounter, and Colonel Edwin R. Biles, of the former regiment, received high praise for his spirited and intelligent conduct. At the same time Barlow's skirmish line was advanced against the breastworks spoken of. The skirmishers consisted of the One Hundred and Eighty-third Pennsylvania, Twenty-eighth Massachusetts, and Twenty-sixth Michigan; and were commanded by the youthful colonel of the first-named regiment, Lynch, accompanied in person by General Miles, from whose brigade they were taken. Miles, ever on the alert, seized certain opportunities afforded by the ground, partially protecting and concealing his advance, and threw the skirmish line forward against the breastworks. Although the intrenchments were held by both infantry and artillery, so spirited was the advance, so skilful were the dispositions made, that they were actually carried by the skirmishers alone. Some prisoners were taken, though the retreat of the enemy was too precipitate to allow of many cap-

tures ; and four splendid twenty-pound Parrotts with their caissons became the trophies of Lynch's brilliant charge.

Never, I think, did men of the Second Corps so greatly enjoy riding Confederate cannon into camp. Ten-pound Parrotts our fellows knew, knew them subjectively and knew them objectively ; knew them by shelling and knew them by being shelled ; but twenty-pound Parrotts seemed altogether a different thing, and as the great engines were one after another hauled out of the works and brought down the road on the run, they were greeted with loud cheers and accepted as a full compensation for McKnight's Napoleons.

So fortunate a beginning promised a successful day. Gibbon's division was thrown forward in pursuit of the retreating enemy ; a battery on the right was speedily driven off by our artillery, assisted by the fire of Mott's skirmishers, and, moving by a cross road to the Long Bridge Road, withdrew behind the stream. When, however, the advance was made to Bailey's Creek, the enemy were found in well-constructed works, apparently well manned and covered with abattis. The position, as developed, was one of great natural strength, the creek itself, as stated by General Morgan, being an obstacle that could not be passed by a line of battle, while the intervening ground, being perfectly open, could be swept from end to end by both musketry and artillery fire. A close inspection showing that the result of an assault would be doubtful, everything was now bent to turning the enemy's line. The cavalry, which had come up, gained, by several spirited charges, some high ground on the right which it was hoped would be of use ; but it was discovered that the enemy's flank was refused sharply toward their rear at Fussell's Mill. Consequently, while Gibbon's division held the front, Mott's and Barlow's

divisions were moved over to operate with the cavalry. Barlow made a vigorous reconnoissance, but did not succeed in finding the extreme flank of the enemy, who, by this time, had been largely reinforced.

Such was the situation when, at about three o'clock, General Grant visited the field. Owing to the great extent over which the corps had been stretched in its effort to outflank the enemy, the Lieutenant-General missed Hancock; but left a note, saying he had ridden along the lines and did not see that much was likely to be done, but still desired the cavalry to be released for its movement against Richmond, if practicable. His information was that seven infantry brigades, with cavalry, were opposed to Hancock. General Humphreys, in his history, states that Wilcox's and Kershaw's divisions had been sent across the river from Petersburg before our movement began, and were joined on the 27th by Heth's division.

On our side Gibbon's division was relieved by Birge's brigade of the Tenth Corps, and General Sheridan was placed under Hancock's orders, it being decided that he should advance up the Central or Charles City Road, if either could be opened.

About ten o'clock in the evening the following despatch was received at Second Corps headquarters, having been sent on by General Meade:

CITY POINT, 9.10 P.M., July 27th.

The position now occupied by Hancock would give Sheridan no protection in returning by way of Bottom's Bridge. I do not want him to go, unless the enemy is driven into Chapin's Bluff or back to the city; otherwise he would be compelled to return north of the Chickahominy, and it would be two or three weeks before his cavalry would be fit for other service. I do not want Hancock to assault intrenched lines; but I do want him to remain another

day and, if he can, with the assistance of the cavalry, turn the enemy's position and drive him away. It looks to me as if the cavalry might move well out, and get in rear of the enemy.

U. S. GRANT,
Lieutenant-General.

General Grant might well feel confident that, with two such officers as Hancock and Sheridan on the ground, everything would be done to effect his purpose; but, in fact, the enemy were now too strong, north of the James, to permit the prosecution of the enterprise against Richmond. On the morning of the 28th Kershaw's infantry advanced against Sheridan and drove the cavalry back over the ridge upon which they were posted. Dismounting his men, Sheridan met the enemy in full career and drove them back, capturing two hundred prisoners and two colors.

But while Grant was thus compelled to abandon the first part of his plan, on account of the rapid concentration of the enemy, the movement was fast becoming a brilliant success, considered with reference to the impending assault upon Petersburg. General W. H. F. Lee's division of cavalry had now joined the enemy north of the James; and, during the 29th, Field's infantry and Fitzhugh Lee's cavalry division were also drawn over, the Confederate commander in chief being convinced, by the energetic demonstrations of the 27th, that Grant was determined to force his way into Richmond, on this side, at all hazards. Five-eighths of the hostile army were now on the north bank, confronting Hancock and Sheridan, while, far away to the south, Burnside's Ninth, Ord's Eighteenth, and Warren's Fifth Corps, stood ready to enter Petersburg through the hideous avenue which might at any time be laid open by the explosion of Burnside's mine. Not only this, but on the night of the 28th

Grant had the courage to direct that Mott's division, now far the largest of the Second Corps, should be sent back to Petersburg to relieve Ord in his intrenchments, and thus reinforce the column available for the impending assault.

The day of the 29th was one of great anxiety to the little column on the north bank of the James. Two small divisions of infantry, supported only by the cavalry, were there face to face with the larger half of Lee's army. In such a situation audacity is the best path to safety; and all through this critical day Hancock, well seconded by Barlow and Gibbon, kept up his demonstrations of a purpose to prosecute his enterprise out the Central and Charles City Roads. So active and aggressive were his movements that it did not enter Lee's mind to distrust their purpose. When night fell, the infantry of the Second Corps took the route for Petersburg; the cavalry followed; and when day broke on the 30th, four hundred men, occupying a bridge-head, were all that confronted the Confederate divisions on the north bank of the James, while the whole Union army was concentrated against Petersburg, the head of the Second Corps column arriving in time to see the vast mass of earth which had been Elliott's salient rise into the air, with guns and hundreds of human bodies, under the terrific impulse of the tons of gunpowder that had been stored beneath it.

The loss of the corps in the first expedition to Deep Bottom had been 79, in the First Division; 45, in the Second; 65, in the Third; 3, in the Artillery Brigade—total, 192. Of these, 26 had been killed, 109 wounded, and 57 were missing. Twelve were commissioned officers; 180, enlisted men. The only officer killed was Lieutenant Thomas Clark, Fortieth New York.

THE MINE.

It does not fall within the scope of this history to describe the wretched fiasco of the 30th of July. Had adequate arrangements been made, and had the troops at hand been put in, with even the lowest degree of vigor, noon of that day must have seen Petersburg in our power and a third of Lee's army lopped off at a blow. Not only had a wide breach been made in the enemy's lines, but the consternation spread among the adjacent troops by a catastrophe so terrible had caused the Confederate line to unravel, in both directions, to a considerable distance. Had the division assigned to the assault been properly led, it could have gone straight to the crest which overlooked the enemy's works, receiving scarcely a shot in its way. But neither General Ledlie, the commander of the leading division, nor General Ferrero, commanding the first supporting division, was in a position from which he could see either the enemy's line or his own troops. The corps commander had neglected his instructions to level his parapets and remove his abattis, for the passage of his columns. Even these defects might have been remedied, within the time allowed by the tremendous effects of the explosion, had any degree of energy been exhibited in this crisis; but the same fatal hesitation shown at Antietam and in the Wilderness, here wasted the hour needed to enable the Confederates to recover from their shock and surprise, to bring up artillery to command the breach, and to wall it around with a line of resolute and tenacious infantry. When at last the troops went forward, it was uncertainly and timidly, for want of proper leadership and staff service; large numbers of them huddled in the "crater," or deep chasm

formed by the explosion, where they were ultimately captured by the Confederates.

Never, before or after, in the history of the Potomac army, was such an exhibition made of official incapacity and personal cowardice. Speaking generally, our officers of rank were only too ready to expose themselves to danger; and the lists of killed and wounded testify how faithfully they discharged the trusts committed to them. But at the Mine two division commanders were hiding in bomb-proofs, while their troops wandered aimlessly from lack of direction, or halted in front of obstacles which a single manly effort would have overcome. This unhappy day cost the Union army four thousand men. The loss to the Confederates was less than one-third of this, even including the victims of the explosion.

During this affair Mott's division held Ord's intrenchments, to enable the Eighteenth Corps to be massed for assault, while the remaining divisions of the Second Corps were in reserve.

THE SECOND DEEP BOTTOM.

Between the 31st of July and the 12th of August the Second Corps remained in its old camps, in the neighborhood of the Deserted House, General Hancock being employed in the important duty of presiding over the court of inquiry appointed by the President to investigate the causes of the failure at the Mine.

On the date last mentioned the corps received orders to undertake another movement across the James. The occasion for the new enterprise was found in the information which had reached General Grant, that Lee was strongly reinforcing General Early, then operating in the Valley.

The general object of the expedition was nearly the same as that of the expedition of July ; but the method of proceeding was changed. It would be difficult to say that it was thereby improved. The corps was to proceed to City Point and there take steamers, to create the impression on the part of the Confederates, who were certain to learn of the movement, that it was bound for Washington, to resist Early. Under cover of night, however, the steamers were to run up the James, sixteen miles, to Deep Bottom ; gang-planks were to be thrown out, and the troops, rapidly debarking, were to press up the several roads to Richmond ; turn the enemy's line on Bailey's Creek, and push forward to the Confederate capital. It is hard to believe that such a scheme could have been seriously considered before adoption. It is only to be explained by supposing that those who conceived it were familiar with the operation of landing men, cattle, and goods, from light-draft steamers, on western rivers. Large coastwise steamers, on a tidal river, however, were certain to offer a very different problem. Sixteen vessels, ocean-going or large river steamers, some of them drawing as much as thirteen feet, were provided for the expedition.

The corps marched at noon of the 12th of August, bivouacked at City Point, and at noon of the 13th commenced embarkation. Meanwhile, General Hancock, who, having had extensive quartermaster's experience in the old army, was very skeptical as to the "gang-plank" feature, took a tug and, with General Ingalls, proceeded to Deep Bottom. Here it was found that the nature of the banks and state of the water would not allow most, if any, of the vessels to land men over a gang-plank. The ruins of three wharves were found, which could easily have been repaired with a little previous

notice. Having ascertained the facts of the case, Hancock proceeded to City Point, and then sent up a tug-load of lumber, with one of his own staff, charging that officer to put the wharves in as good condition as might be in the brief space remaining.

Midnight had been fixed for the departure ; but, on General Hancock's recommendation, the hour was changed to 10 P.M. The night being dark, constant showing of lights and blowing of whistles had to be resorted to in order to prevent collision in the narrow stream.

It was 2.30 A.M. when the debarkation began. The men had been crowded very closely in the boats, and in getting off much delay was occasioned by the tedious filing down the narrow stairways between decks. There being but three wharves, steamers had to wait for others to unload. Some of the vessels drew so much water that they could not get up to the wharves at all, but were obliged to unload across others ; while the largest steamer, containing a brigade, grounded in the stream and remained there for several hours.

But while the Second Corps was the body of troops charged with effecting, by the foregoing elaborate operation, a surprise of the enemy at Deep Bottom, it was not to act alone. General Gregg's division of cavalry had moved by way of Point of Rocks and Bermuda Hundred, followed by the artillery and trains ; and Birney's Tenth Corps, at or near Deep Bottom, was also placed under Hancock's command.

General Hancock had prepared the following plan of operations, based upon a knowledge of the country obtained in the previous expedition :

HEADQUARTERS, SECOND ARMY CORPS,
CITY POINT, August 13, 1864.

[Confidential Circular.]

PARAGRAPH 6.—At daybreak, or as soon as General Mott's division has disembarked, he will proceed up the Newmarket and Malvern Hill Road, driving the enemy into his intrenched line behind Bailey's Creek, or beyond it, if practicable.

During this, the cavalry under General Gregg will cover the right flank of General Mott's division.

As soon as the Second and First Divisions of the Second Corps are disembarked, they will, under the command of General Barlow, move to General Mott's right, and assault the enemy's lines near the Jennings House.

If the line is carried, General Barlow will move to the left and uncover General Mott's front, who will then advance along the Newmarket Road.

PARAGRAPH 7.—The cavalry will cover the right flank of General Barlow's command during this operation.

As soon as the Central and Charles City Court House Roads are uncovered by the advance of the infantry, General Gregg will proceed to execute the orders already received by him,¹ identical with those of July 25th.

PARAGRAPH 8.—General Birney, with his command, will be prepared to attack the enemy, in position behind Four Mile Run, at daybreak. The hour for attack, however, will be specially designated to General Birney. If successful, he will advance along the Newmarket and Kingsland Road to the junction of the Varina Road; then along the Varina Road to the Mill Road, securing, if possible, the cross-roads at Osborne's old turnpike.

By command of General HANCOCK,
FRANCIS A. WALKER, *Assistant Adjutant-General*.

Notwithstanding the most strenuous exertions of General Hancock and his subordinates, Mott's division was

¹ Namely, to threaten or attempt Richmond, if practicable; if not, to destroy the Virginia Central Railroad.

not debarked until forty minutes past seven, four hours after it should have been on shore to effect the contemplated surprise. At the same hour all of Barlow's division had landed except the brigade on the grounded steamer. Firing had opened on Birney's front at five o'clock ; but he was instructed to suspend operations on account of the delay attending the movement of the other troops. Gregg's cavalry division had crossed the bridge on Jones' Neck at five. As soon as Mott's last regiment was ashore, he was ordered to push out toward Bailey's Creek.

The temperature of the day that had opened was something dreadful. The columns, moving out from the landing, literally passed between men lying on both sides, dead from sunstroke. Before noon, General Mott reported to me that, in two small regiments of his division, one hundred and five men had been overcome by heat. The rays of the August sun smote the heads of the weary soldiers with blows as palpable as if they had been given with a club.

It was half-past eleven before the stranded brigade of Barlow's division was ready to move out. General Gibbon being absent on a brief leave, the Second Division was this day commanded by Colonel Smyth, First Delaware ; and General Hancock had accordingly placed General Barlow in command of that division in addition to his own. In this he was actuated by several motives. He desired to give that officer an opportunity, such as seemed at this time specially to be offered, to secure that promotion which he coveted with the just ambition of a faithful soldier, and which he had already abundantly merited for his services from the Po to the Appomattox. General Hancock knew, moreover, that Barlow was an officer, not only of dauntless courage, but of great energy ;

and he desired the enterprise of this day to be prosecuted with the utmost vigor. Finally, he was influenced by the consideration that Barlow had held that part of the line from which the attack was now to be made, when at Deep Bottom in July.

It was intended that Barlow's two divisions should constitute a column which should move as directly as possible from the point of debarkation to the Jennings House, where he should deliver an attack with his whole force. Probably, however, because of fears for his own flank, General Barlow undertook to carry on this movement while maintaining connection with the other troops, by which it came about, not only that time was lost in reaching the point of attack, but also that a large part of the force needed for the assault was strung out in a long line. When, finally, Barlow, at about four o'clock, delivered his attack, he was repulsed, only one of his brigades being seriously engaged.

In justice to General Barlow, as well as to the truth of history, it should be said that his official report states that the troops bore themselves without any spirit, and were thrown off by a feeble resistance; that he had intended to attack with two brigades, but that one of these showed such signs of demoralization that he decided to make the attack with the other alone. The attacking brigade was led in the most gallant manner by Colonel George N. Macy, of the Twentieth Massachusetts, who had just returned from his Wilderness wounds, and was here again severely injured by the falling of his horse.¹

Concerning the reported ill-behavior of the troops on this occasion, it is enough to say that the two brigades

¹ Colonel Macy lost a hand at Gettysburg. He was subsequently Provost-Marshal General of the Army of the Potomac.

referred to had been among the chief glories of the Second Corps. General Morgan justly remarks: "Nothing could so clearly show the disorganization brought about by the terrible losses of this campaign as that such language could be truthfully used about these troops. The Irish brigade had left its dead, with their sprigs of green in their caps, close under the stone wall at Fredericksburg; and had shown on every field the most determined bravery. Brooke's brigade had fought its way to the front as far as our flag was ever carried, at Gettysburg; had shown the highest attributes of the soldier in the disheartening yet victorious conflict of the Po, May 10th; had led Barlow's charge, side by side with Miles' brigade, at Spottsylvania; had made the brilliant night attack on the Totopotomoy; had penetrated the enemy's line in the desperate charge at Cold Harbor; and now, with its fourth or fifth commander, was, according to General Barlow, loath to look at the enemy. It is evident," concludes Morgan, "that assaults 'all along the line' had left very little of the old material there." It is manifest, moreover, that the sufferings of the troops under the intense heat of the day had deprived them of much of the vigor they might otherwise have displayed.

The only effect of the operations of Barlow and Mott, this day, was to draw from Birney's front some of the enemy's troops; by which Birney was enabled to seize a portion of their line, capturing four eight-inch howitzers, three of which he brought off, the fourth being secured, next day, by Mott's men. Owing to the wide extent of country covered by the movements of the day, and the density of the woods, General Hancock had found it exceedingly difficult to keep up a sufficiently frequent communication with his subordinate commanders, being

left, at times, without a staff officer, owing to a multiplicity of messages he found it necessary to send great distances through the woods.

Although it is freely confessed that the attack of the Second Corps near Fussell's Mill was not made with the vigor fairly to be expected, nothing better could have resulted had the troops there displayed their pristine enterprise and resolution. The fact is, the expedition across the James had been undertaken upon erroneous information. General Grant believed that three divisions had been sent to reinforce Early. Only one, however (Kershaw's), had actually gone. Field's division of Longstreet's corps had remained in the Deep Bottom and Bailey's Creek intrenchments; Wilcox's division of Hill's corps was at Chapin's Bluff, near at hand, ready to move down and reinforce Field; while Mahone's division, also of Hill's corps, with Hampton's and W. H. F. Lee's cavalry divisions, were, on the first intimation of Hancock's movement, sent across the James to meet the impending attack.

During the night of the 14th the greater part of Birney's Tenth Corps was marched to the vicinity of Fussell's Mill, and there massed in order for attack, reinforced by Craig's brigade; ¹ Gibbon's division, Smyth commanding, was on Birney's left; Barlow's division was near the fork of the Derbytown and Long Bridge Roads; Mott, with three brigades, was on the river road.

The order of the day for the 15th was, that Birney should find the enemy's left, and turn it, or, failing in that, should attack, Gregg covering the movement on

¹ Formerly General Alexander Hays', now commanded by Colonel C. A. Craig, One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania.

the right ; but General Birney took so wide a circuit that it was night before he reported he had found the enemy's line.

On the morning of the 16th of August, Gregg's cavalry, supported by Miles' brigade of Barlow's division, moved up the Charles City Road, driving the enemy's cavalry before him as far as White's Tavern, only seven miles from Richmond. The commander of the Confederate cavalry, General Chambliss, was killed, his body falling into our hands. Meanwhile, at ten o'clock, Birney had attacked the enemy's works beyond Fussell's Mill, with Terry's division of his own corps, a brigade of colored troops commanded by General William Birney, and Craig's brigade from the Second Corps. After a severe contest the works were carried, three colors being captured, with two or three hundred prisoners from Wilcox's and Mahone's divisions. General Terry led his column on this occasion with that spirit and intelligence which were subsequently to give him so high a rank in the army. Colonel Craig was killed while displaying fine soldiership and great bravery.

General Birney was not permitted long to hold the captured works. The enemy, being heavily reinforced, attacked in turn, and drove out our troops, who, however, still held the intrenched Confederate picket line. Meanwhile, Gregg and Miles were attacked by the enemy, who had received large reinforcements of all arms, and were pushed back to Deep Creek. Of this, General Morgan says : " This movement was conducted with admirable skill and coolness, our troops retiring slowly, by successive lines ; permitting the enemy to approach the first line, which would give him a rough reception, repulse him, and then retire behind the second line which had in the meantime been formed about one-half mile in

rear of the first. In this manner Miles and Gregg fought stubbornly back to Deep Creek, never permitting the enemy to move them until they were prepared to receive and repel them by a second line. The whole order of the movement was cool and soldierly. No dead or wounded of ours were left on the field, the cavalry bringing in their dead either strapped across the led horses or in front of troopers." Gregg having re-established himself behind Deep Creek, Miles returned to Fussell's Mill, taking post on Birney's right, and assuming command, in addition to his own, of the Fourth Brigade of the First Division, which, at Birney's request, had been sent over.

While these several operations were in progress, Mott had pressed the enemy with his skirmishers along Bailey's Creek, to ascertain if they were in force and to prevent any reinforcement of the troops opposing Birney. On each occasion the Confederate works were found well manned.

General Birney had proposed to attack again at five o'clock in the afternoon ; but, on advancing his skirmishers, found the enemy so strong that the contemplated assault was abandoned. Toward evening, Gregg, who had been holding a line in front of Deep Creek, was attacked in such force as to compel him to withdraw to the nearer bank, where he was able to maintain himself.

General Grant had now ascertained that his information regarding the strength of the enemy had been erroneous ; and he had therefore no thought of further pursuing the enterprise on the north bank of the James. Inasmuch, however, as he was now preparing a movement, with Warren's corps, against the Weldon Railroad, on the extreme left, below Petersburg, he determined to retain Hancock's troops in their position, threatening Richmond, a few days longer, to hold the enemy's attention and occupy their forces.

During the 17th there was heavy skirmishing along our lines, in the course of which the corps lost another valuable officer in Colonel Daniel Chaplin, First Maine Heavy Artillery, killed on the skirmish line. At noon of this day Major Mitchell, of the corps staff, was sent out, with the consent of General Grant, with a flag of truce, to propose a cessation of hostilities, for the purpose of removing the dead and wounded of both sides from between the lines. After being fired on several times, Major Mitchell succeeded in getting his flag recognized ; and a truce was arranged, to continue from 4 to 6 P.M. No wounded were found between the lines ; but the dead of both armies were removed, and the body of General Chambliss, killed on the 16th, and by us buried at the "Potteries," was taken from the ground and delivered to his comrades.

On the 18th General Barlow was compelled to relinquish command of his division. He had fought against disease and the effects of his ghastly wounds, received at Antietam and Gettysburg, no less bravely than he had fought against the public enemy. During several days preceding he had been more like a dead than a living man. A few days later he made an attempt to resume command of his division ; but had to be carried, on a stretcher, from the field at Reams' Station, shortly before the opening of that battle. General Barlow was succeeded in the command of his division by General Miles.

At 5.30 P.M. the enemy sallied out on the Central Road, to the right of Fussell's Mill, and attacked Birney with considerable vigor. For twenty minutes the roar of musketry was tremendous. General Miles, with the First and Fourth Brigades of the First Division, took part in this affair, attacking the flank of the Confederates, who were finally repulsed. At the same time

the enemy appeared in some force on the road leading from the Charles City Road across White Oak Swamp, pushing back Gregg's cavalry. This was reported to Hancock as a movement in force into his rear, with infantry and artillery ; and Miles' brigade was immediately sent to Gregg's support. Early in the following morning the enemy retired within his lines.

At 8 P.M. of the 18th General Hancock was directed to send Mott's division back to Petersburg, to take the place of the Ninth Corps in the intrenchments, in order that the latter corps, now under General Parke, might support Warren in the contemplated movement against the Weldon Railroad. Mott's withdrawal rendered a contraction of Hancock's line necessary ; but no change was made in the picket line save that the right was somewhat refused.

During the morning of the 19th General Grant telegraphed that it was thought that the enemy had sent one division to Petersburg ; and advised General Hancock not to hesitate to attack if an opportunity offered. No opening or weak spot had yet been discovered ; but General Hancock, ever ready to obey both the letter and the spirit of his instructions, made a close personal reconnoissance of the enemy's line, and determined to attack a short distance to the left of the point where Barlow had been repulsed. It was thought that the enemy's line could be broken there ; but General Hancock was unable to perceive that any decided results would follow, and, as the enemy were in force, he doubted whether the position could be held if carried. The situation was fully described to General Grant, by telegraph, who stated that he did not wish an attack made unless with the chance of surprise or the prospect of some marked advantage. The assault was therefore not delivered. It

had been intended to give Miles a brigade of colored troops, in addition to his own division, with which to attempt the enemy's works. During the afternoon General Hancock was instructed to send one of Gregg's cavalry brigades to General Meade at Petersburg.

Nothing of interest occurred on the 20th. During the day Hancock was instructed to withdraw his command from Deep Bottom; and immediately after dark the First and Second Divisions commenced the movement, by way of Point of Rocks, to their old camps near Petersburg. The cavalry withdrew by Broadway Landing. The Tenth Corps returned to the position held by it on the 10th of August. The rain fell continuously during the night, and the roads were heavy, but the two divisions of the corps accomplished their long march by daylight of the 21st.

The casualties of the Second Corps during the second expedition to Deep Bottom aggregated 915, distributed as follows: Artillery, 2; First Division, 420; Second Division, 236; Third Division, 257: 95 had been killed; 553 wounded; 267 were missing: 48 were commissioned officers, and 867 were enlisted men. The officers killed or mortally wounded were:

Colonel Calvin A. Craig, One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania.

Colonel Daniel Chaplin, First Maine Heavy Artillery.

Captain Patrick Nolan, Twenty-eighth Massachusetts.

Captain Henry C. Hooker and Lieutenant Jonas Zoller, Second New York Heavy Artillery.

Captain James J. Messervy, Sixty-fourth New York.

Captain Reuben Lindley, Thirty-sixth Wisconsin.

Captain John Connery, One Hundred and Seventieth New York.

Lieutenant Hartman S. Felt, Seventh Michigan.

CHAPTER XXII.

REAMS' STATION.

THE roads from Deep Bottom to Petersburg were in a miserable condition, even for Virginia, on the return of the Second Corps from its second expedition north of the James, and the night march had been very exhausting. Despite the fatigue of the men, they were allowed to remain in camp only long enough to make coffee, when the First and Second Divisions were ordered to the vicinity of the Strong House, to cut slashing and perfect a defensive line. Short as was the distance, hundreds fell by the way. Directly upon the arrival of the two divisions at the point where they were to work, orders were received to move on to the Gurley House, in the rear of the Fifth Corps, which had, between the 18th and 21st, carried our arms several miles southward, seizing and holding the Weldon Railroad, after two severe actions. The troops reached their final position late in the afternoon, and passed the night in the mud, under a pouring rain. At noon of the 22d the First Division was set to work destroying the Weldon Railroad southward. By the 24th it had torn up the track as far as Reams' Station.

. During the 24th Gibbon's division was forwarded to Reams', where General Hancock took command, Mott's division being still behind the Petersburg lines. At Reams' Station, twelve miles south from Petersburg,

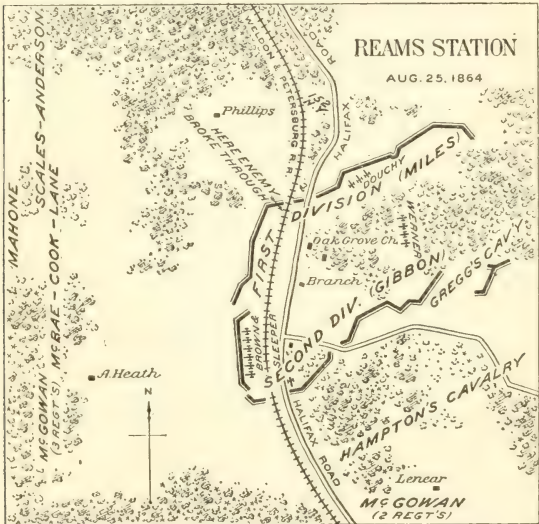
Hancock found General Gregg, with a cavalry force consisting of two brigades of his own division and a regiment and a squadron from the division of Kautz. The cavalry had been sharply attacked upon the Dinwiddie Stage Road by the Confederate cavalry division of Butler. As yet, however, no infantry had appeared to oppose the troops engaged in tearing up the railroad. On arriving at Reams', Gibbon's division took post in the intrenchments surrounding the station, which had been constructed by either the Sixth Corps or the cavalry, on the occasion of General James H. Wilson's fight near this point, some weeks previous.

The story of the 25th of August cannot be understood without reference to this most unfortunate line of works. The general plan of these intrenchments appears on the following map :

It will be seen that only a short face was presented to the enemy, and that both sides of the works, as drawn back on the right and on the left, were exposed to an enfilading fire. Moreover, the distance across, from one side to the other, was so short that the enemy's artillery on either side could make the opposite line untenable; and the spectacle was more than once presented, on the 25th, of a brigade abandoning the inside of the works to seek refuge upon the outside. But the worst feature was that the front of the works extended beyond the railroad. The two batteries and the few small battalions which were to receive here the assault of Lee's veteran brigades found themselves with a low parapet in front, while behind them, at a distance perhaps of twenty or thirty yards, and in the main parallel to the parapet, ran the railroad, forming here an embankment and there a cut, which made it impossible for ammunition or reserves to be brought up, except at disadvantage, or for the troops to retire without exposure

to observation and to fire. The consequences of this false position will be seen as we continue our narrative.

General Humphreys, in his Virginia campaigns, states that the intrenchments had a return of about eight hundred or one thousand yards long at each end, and that they ran along the railroad for a distance of about twelve



hundred yards. This statement is erroneous as regards the length of the intrenchments along the railroad. The position has recently been inspected by Colonel William P. Wilson, of Trenton, formerly of the Second Corps staff, who states that this portion of the line did not exceed seven hundred yards in length.

During the afternoon of the 24th General Miles con-

tinued the work of tearing up the road, destroying ties and rails, progressing as far as Malone's Crossing, some three miles beyond Reams'. The advance of the working parties was covered by a regiment and an additional squadron of cavalry under Colonel Spear, of the Eleventh Pennsylvania, from Kautz's division. Gregg's cavalry held the approaches in the direction of Petersburg and Dinwiddie Court House. At dark, Miles' division was drawn back to the intrenchments.

At half-past ten on the night of the 24th General Hancock received a despatch from General Humphreys stating that large bodies of infantry, apparently destined to operate against Warren or Hancock, had been seen passing southward from the Petersburg intrenchments, by the Halifax and Vaughan Roads. General Hancock replied, requesting to know the number of men seen and the time, stating that, if the enemy were undertaking a serious operation against himself, he did not desire to separate his troops so far as would be necessary to carry out his instructions, viz., to destroy the railroad to Rowanty Creek, eight miles below Reams'.

General Hancock was informed that the signal officers reported the enemy seen to number, apparently, eight or ten thousand men, and the time of leaving their works, about sunset. General Warren, on his part, expressed the opinion that the troops seen might be working parties, as it was known that the enemy was constructing a new line, adding that, if they were moving with a hostile intention, they could do nothing against himself, as his left was now secure.

Here appears the most obvious criticism upon subsequent events. With the enemy operating in force in that direction, much further progress in the work of destroying the railroad was not to be expected.

General Meade had frequently expressed the desire that the enemy should come out of his works and fight in the open. The moment appeared to offer the long-desired opportunity.

Hancock had under his command, at the most, six to seven thousand infantry, with perhaps two thousand cavalry. Meade could have sent to Reams' twenty or even twenty-five thousand men, including Hancock's force, even more easily than Lee could send fifteen thousand.

If Meade did not intend to fight, Hancock should have been withdrawn. If he did intend to fight, Hancock should have been powerfully reinforced.

At daylight on the morning of the 25th General Hancock directed Gregg to make a reconnoissance at once, with a small party, to ascertain what was in front; and orders were issued for a more extended reconnoissance, by Gregg's entire force, supported by a brigade of infantry. But, before the troops were assembled, the first squadrons which had been sent out returned with the report that they had driven in the enemy's pickets at two points without developing any increase of strength. General Hancock determined, therefore, to go on with the work of destroying the railroad, and Gibbon moved out for this purpose. Hardly had he got well out of the works when Colonel Spear was driven away from Malone's Cross-roads, and Gibbon was obliged to deploy a strong skirmish line to check the enemy in pursuit. It was now evident that Gibbon's division had more serious business than tearing up the track; and it was ordered back to the breastworks, taking the left of the line. It was ten o'clock before the withdrawal was made. At this time communication with army headquarters was by messenger along the Halifax Road, which closely fol-

lowed the railroad and by which the infantry had marched to Reams'. A messenger going up the road would, in four or five miles, strike Warren's headquarters, whence communication could be had by telegraph with Meade's headquarters. A little before twelve o'clock, however, the field telegraph was in operation the whole distance from army headquarters to Reams'.

General Meade, having been informed of the skirmish of the morning, sent the following despatch.

It will be observed that Meade was at that hour making his headquarters with Warren.

HEADQUARTERS, FIFTH CORPS,
1 P.M., August 25, 1864.

MAJOR-GENERAL HANCOCK :

Warren has informed me of your despatch, announcing the breaking through your left of the enemy's cavalry. I have directed Mott to send all his available force down the plank road, to the Reams' Station Road, and to take one of Parke's (Ninth Corps) batteries, now at the Williams House, with him. The officer in charge of this command is directed to report to you his arrival. I think, from all the information I can obtain, that the enemy is about assuming the offensive, and will either attack you or interpose between you and Warren. Under these circumstances, I fear we cannot do much more damage to the railroad. That being the case, you can exercise your judgment about withdrawing your command and resuming your position on the left and rear of Warren, either where you were before, or in any other position which in your judgment will be better calculated for the purpose, and based on the knowledge of the country your recent operations may have given you. Let me know by the bearer the condition of things in your front and your views.

GEORGE G. MEADE.

This despatch was received by the hand of Captain Sanders, of General Meade's staff; and this fact introduces another of the inexplicable features of the series

of operations we are recounting, viz., that, although the field telegraph had been completed before General Hancock sent his despatch of 11.45 to General Meade, the latter continued to send all his messages, until half-past seven o'clock in the evening, by staff officers.

When Captain Sanders arrived the enemy had already made one or more efforts to carry our line. Subsequently to twelve o'clock noon, they had driven Miles' skirmishers out of their rifle-pits, and had, about 2 P.M., made two assaults in line of battle, which were repulsed with considerable loss, some of the Confederates falling, as Miles reported, within three yards of his intrenchments. Skirmishers having been thrown out, a few prisoners were captured.

The Confederate force, thus interrupting Hancock's operations on the Weldon Railroad, consisted of three brigades of Wilcox's division, viz.: Lane's, Scales', and McGowan's, and G. T. Anderson's brigade of Field's division; two divisions of cavalry under General Wade Hampton, viz.: his own and Butler's, with artillery, all under the command of Lieutenant-General A. P. Hill. The infantry had been freshly sent down by General Lee from the Petersburg lines, and were to be speedily followed by others. This force, now fully up in front of the Union works, was concealed by woods which, on the side toward the station, had been slashed by us to some extent, though not so much as General Hancock had designed. The ground immediately in front of the Union intrenchments was comparatively clear of timber, though with brush sufficiently high, in many places, to conceal the movement of troops and even of guns. The four brigades of the Confederates were thus disposed: McGowan's was sent around to the right, to join Hampton's cavalry in threatening the Union left, where it was re-

tired toward the rear. Lane's, Scales', and Anderson's brigades were sent to the Confederate left, with a view to an advance against the point where the intrenchments turned sharply to run to the rear and right, that is, against the northwest angle.

This was the advance which was made, as related, about two o'clock. Anderson was on the Confederate right, moving through sparse woods, Scales on the left, in thicker woods, his extreme left being covered by two regiments of Lane's brigade.

As the Confederates advanced into the open ground they were met by a heavy fire from the troops in and near the angle, and from Dauchey's¹ and Sleeper's batteries. They came gallantly on until almost up to the works, when they broke and fell back rapidly, though not in great confusion, into the woods. While Lane's, Anderson's, and Scales' brigades were thus attempting to carry the right of the Union works, McGowan made active demonstrations on his side; and was vigorously shelled by Brown's and Werner's batteries. During this attack Lieutenant-General Hill, who was suffering from temporary illness, was lying on the ground directly in front of the Union intrenchments, leaving all the dispositions to Major-General Cadmus Willcox.

Our losses in the engagement thus far had not been numerous, but among those wounded was Colonel James A. Beaver, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania Regiment, commanding one of Miles' brigades. Colonel Beaver had, but a few minutes before, returned from the absence caused by his wound received on the 16th of June. He had taken command of his brigade when a bullet broke his thigh, necessitating amputation.

¹ Twelfth New York, formerly McKnight's.

The appearance of Willcox's infantry and their determined effort to carry the intrenchments dissipated all doubts as to the enemy's intentions. This was no casual encounter, nor was it likely that a small and unsupported force of infantry would be found at so great a distance from the main Confederate line. The probability of an attack from a force of considerable, yet undetermined strength, might fairly be considered to raise the question whether the two small divisions of the Second Corps at Reams' should not be withdrawn.

But Hancock was not much accustomed to retreat, of his own motion, and he had every right to rely on being promptly supported by reinforcements at least equal to those which Lee could draw from his depleted lines. The proximity of Warren's left, hardly four miles away, behind which large bodies of troops, including the divisions of Griffin and Crawford, Fifth Corps, and of Willcox and White, Ninth Corps, were known to be massed, appeared to offer every assurance that no disaster should occur at Reams' from lack of Union troops.

Even, however, had Hancock been disposed to consider the expediency of a retreat at this juncture, the unfortunate formation, already commented on, of the works at the station would have rendered it a very critical operation. Already a great part of the artillery horses beyond the railroad had been picked off by the enemy's sharpshooters or shot down in Willcox's charge.

On the repulse of the Confederates, as recited, General Hancock, at 2.45, sent a telegram to General Meade, stating that, as he could do no more on the railroad, it seemed more important that he should join General Warren than remain longer [this in response to General Meade's suggestion]; but, on account of being already closely engaged, he could not safely retire at that time,

and advised that he should be withdrawn during the night, in case he were not forced out previously. The despatch further stated that everything looked promising; but, as the enemy might penetrate between Warren and himself, the former should be watchful until a practical connection could be made. An hour later General Hancock sent another telegram, informing General Meade that the prisoners thus far taken belonged to Willcox's division, and that Anderson's brigade, of Field's division, was also known to be present.

Meanwhile, at 2.40 P.M., General Meade, still sending despatches by messenger, addressed the following to General Hancock:

HEADQUARTERS, FIFTH CORPS, 2.40 P.M.

MAJOR-GENERAL HANCOCK :

In addition to Mott's troops, I have ordered Willcox's division, Ninth Corps, to the plank road, where the Reams' Station Road branches off. Willcox is ordered to report to you. Call him up if necessary. He will have some artillery with him. I hope you will be able to give the enemy a good threshing. All I apprehend is his being able to interpose between you and Warren. You must look out for this. I hold some more of Warren's forces ready for contingencies.

GEORGE G. MEADE.

This despatch was received by the hands of Captain Rosecrantz, a little after four o'clock.

During the period covered by the despatches recited, important reinforcements were arriving on the Confederate side. Major-General Heth came on the field, with Cook's and McRae's brigades of his own division; two of Mahone's brigades, Saunders' and Weisinger's, being still on the road. With Heth came eight of Pegram's guns. Heth fixes the time of his arrival at about three o'clock.

Hill being still indisposed, Heth assumed the ar-

rangements for the final attack, which, it was resolved, should be made to turn the Confederate repulse into a victory.

The point selected was the same as that chosen by Willcox, viz., the northwestern angle.

Let us now indicate the positions occupied by the troops which were to receive the attack Heth was preparing to deliver.

On our extreme left and rear was the larger half of Gregg's cavalry. A breastwork of rails had been rapidly thrown up, and served as cover for one or two dismounted regiments, which there gained a fire enfilading the front of the intrenchments held by the infantry nearest to them. Connecting with the cavalry, and extending to the right and front, was the third brigade of Gibbon's division, under Colonel Thomas A. Smyth.

On Smyth's right was the first brigade, under Colonel Murphy, extending to the southwest angle. At this angle was Brown's consolidated Rhode Island Battery (A and B, four guns), two of Brown's guns being placed beyond the railroad embankment, having a direct fire to the front, and two behind the railroad, having a fire to the left, where lay Hampton's cavalry and McGowan's infantry. Upon Brown's right, along the main face of the works, was the Tenth Massachusetts battery of Sleeper. Here Miles' division took up the line. In the angle, with the batteries, was the Fourth New York Heavy Artillery, Lieutenant-Colonel Allcock. On the right of the batteries the Fourth Brigade, under Lieutenant-Colonel Broady (the One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania being in reserve), extended across the Dinwiddie Stage Road. On the right of the stage road the railroad made a cut; on the left it formed an embankment which, as we have stated, closed the access to the

rear from Sleeper's battery and the right section of Brown's.

On Broady's right lay the "consolidated" brigade, under Major Byron, Eighty-eighth New York, behind which, and partly in the railroad cut, lay a brigade sent over from the Second Division, consisting of five small regiments under Lieutenant-Colonel Rugg, Fifty-ninth New York. From Major Byron's right, which reached the northwestern angle, the First Brigade, under Colonel James C. Lynch, One Hundred and Eighty-third Pennsylvania, took up the line and extended it to the rear. Half-way back lay the Twelfth New York Battery, now commanded by Lieutenant Dauchey. One of Dauchey's guns, under Lieutenant Brower, had been advanced to near the northwestern angle, that it might rake the railroad should the enemy attempt to cross it north of the station. Although the infantry skirmishers had been driven in from our entire front and left, those of the First Division still held the ground on the north, where they connected with the skirmishers of one of Gregg's cavalry brigades, covering both the Halifax Road and the railroad, running up toward Warren's left. Within Hancock's lines, and behind the church, which occupied the centre of the position, was Werner's Third New Jersey Battery. Such was the arrangement of Hancock's troops at 5.20 P.M.

Meanwhile Heth had prepared his attack. Three of McGowan's regiments had been drawn around to the Confederate left, to participate in the assault on the northwestern angle. Brisk dashes had, at various times, 3.25, 3.35, and 5 P.M., been made against Miles' front by the enemy's skirmishers, but these were easily repulsed. Twenty minutes after the last dash of this kind the Confederate artillery commander, having posted eight guns directly

in front of the intrenchments and close up, opened a terrific fire, in order to shake the troops on whom the impending assault was to fall. The Confederate guns were served with vigor and resolution. Their fire not only swept the whole space enclosed by the intrenchment, but took portions of Gibbon's line, upon the left, in reverse. But the Federal artillery on its side was not dumb. The unfortunate position of Sleeper's and Brown's batteries has already been described. During the early hours of the day these batteries had been lying in a false and distressing position, men and horses completely exposed to the volleys of the enemy, or to the fire of sharpshooters. One by one the horses had fallen, until in Sleeper's battery nearly every animal had been killed, some carcasses being riddled by a dozen balls. Captain Sleeper had himself been wounded, and several of his officers and men had fallen. Brown, upon Sleeper's left, had suffered, though not to the same extent; his right being somewhat protected by a traverse, and the ground in his front being more open. As the Confederate fire broke into fury, these batteries pluckily responded, while Dauchey's, from the right and rear, searched the woods on the northwest, where the enemy were forming.

At about 5.40 P.M. the artillery fire began to slacken, and a strong column of assault appeared, directing its effort against the northwest angle. The attacking force consisted of the brigades of Cooke, McRae, Lane, and Scales, with Anderson's and three regiments of McGowan's supporting. The column encountered not a little obstruction from the slashing of the woods which had taken place at this point, and were not a little shaken by the fire with which they were greeted. Five minutes more of good conduct on the part of the infantry which

occupied the line between Sleeper's right and McKnight's left, would in all probability have ended the fight with a victory for our arms. But it was not to be. In a moment of panic our troops gave way. The enemy leaped the breastworks, and the men of the consolidated brigade either threw themselves upon the ground in surrender, or fled across the railroad. The right gun of Sleeper's battery fired its last load of canister into the charging columns just outside the breastworks; the next gun was hurriedly turned, and discharged its contents into the enemy as they swarmed into the space between the intrenchments and the railroad; the cannoneers of the third piece performed the same soldierly office; the fourth gun was already disabled by the enemy's shot; and the remaining officers and men leaped the embankment. Brown's battery met the same fate, and Dauchey's four guns, after a desperate resistance, also fell into the enemy's hands. In vain did Miles call upon Lieutenant-Colonel Rugg's regiments. They would not move. In the language of General Morgan, "these regiments remained like a covey of partridges until flushed and captured almost *en masse*." When it is remembered that among these was a regiment so renowned as the Twentieth Massachusetts (recently filled up with conscripts and freshly imported recruits), we get a measure of the condition to which incessant marching and fighting had reduced the Second Corps.

After a catastrophe so sudden and terrible, it might well have been expected that the victorious enemy, largely superior as they were in numbers, would sweep down our intrenchments upon the right; double up the remainder of Miles' line; and then, turning to the south, take in reverse Gibbon's line, which, caught between them and the column of Wade Hampton, now pushing forward from

the woods on the south of the station, might easily have been, in large part, captured.

But the victorious Heth had yet to reckon with a few indomitable spirits. Calling up a portion of his own old regiment, the Sixty-first New York, which still remained firm, Miles threw it across the breastworks, at right angles, and commenced to fight his way back,¹ leading the regiment in person. Only a few score of men—perhaps two hundred in all—stood by him; but with these he made ground, step by step, until he had retaken Dauchey's battery (three of whose guns were subsequently brought off the field) and had recaptured a considerable portion of the line, actually driving the enemy into the railroad cut.

Miles had by this time transferred the fighting to the outside of the intrenchments on the right, where he sought to take in flank and rear the Confederates who had leaped the line at the northwestern angle, or were still coming up. As fast as his small party was dissipated, it was reinforced by little handfuls of men, personally collected by his own staff, and by the appeals and exertions of General Hancock, who, galloping to the front, exposed himself far more conspicuously than any private soldier, in his efforts to restore the fortunes of the day. His horse was shot under him; a ball cut his bridle rein in two; the corps flag, which always followed

¹ General Miles was bitterly disappointed by the behavior of a regiment of the Second Division, which had been sent, prior to the first assault, to the outside of the intrenchments, and up the line of the railroad, under the charge of a cool and intelligent officer, Captain Marlin, Acting Assistant Inspector General of the First Division, with a view to having it break out from behind the infantry and cavalry skirmishers on that side and take any assaulting force in flank and rear.

him closely, was pierced by five balls ; another splintered the flagstaff ; the brave and brilliant Brownson, Commissary of Musters, fell mortally wounded.

At times the troops whom Miles and Hancock were leading in person scarcely equalled a captain's command. But, few as they were, their desperate push and stubborn gallantry, when thus inspired, not only checked the progress of the enemy, but actually carried this scanty column forward until hands were laid on Dauchey's most advanced piece, by the side of which the heroic Lieutenant Brower lay dead. Among the officers who were conspicuous for their gallantry in executing the orders of Hancock and Miles were Colonel Lynch and Lieutenant-Colonel Broady.

Turn now to Gibbon, whose line was retired toward the left, along the course of the intrenchments, as shown upon the map.

We have seen how Rugg's brigade failed to respond to Miles' command to move out, restore the line, and retake the batteries. That portion of Murphy's brigade nearest the enemy was driven out, and fell back in confusion. To add to these difficulties a general charge of Hampton's cavalry division (dismounted), accompanied by two of McGowan's regiments of infantry, now fell from the south upon the remaining portion of Gibbon's division, which, under the fire to which the false position of the intrenchments exposed them, had actually climbed over upon the outside of their works for protection. All efforts to bring Gibbon's troops up to the work of re-establishing the line proved fruitless. It is too pitiful a subject to dwell upon. This was the old division of Sedgwick ; and contained regiments which, in name, were those that had won honor in a score of battles. But where were the officers and where the men who had made them renowned ?

At this juncture invaluable service was rendered to the broken command from a source from which the infantry corps were not accustomed to look for assistance in battle. Gregg's First Brigade, which was formed in continuation of the intrenchments, maintained a close and effective fire upon the enemy advancing from the south, and thwarted his efforts to penetrate into our left and rear.

To Gibbon, now, the most earnest appeals were made to rally his troops and re-form them for a general effort, in co-operation with Miles, for the restoration of our line. Portions of the Second Division were brought forward to a small crest which crosses the field of battle parallel to the railroad; but, on receiving the fire of the enemy, these fell back, and all further efforts to bring them up failed. Even the gallant Colonel Smyth, commanding Gibbon's Third Brigade, reported to Major Mitchell that he could not again form his line for an advance. At this juncture Werner's New Jersey battery did admirable service. Originally placed to fire to the south, Werner turned his guns westward upon the enemy advancing from the capture of Brown's and Sleeper's guns. His rapid fire and bold bearing undoubtedly contributed very much to check the disposition for a further advance. Our line now consisted of broken troops, in insufficient number, reaching across the field some three hundred yards in the rear of, and generally parallel to, the railroad and extending some distance outside the intrenchments upon the right; Werner's guns being the sole available artillery. Dauchey's guns had, indeed, been recaptured, but by an odd mistake the provost guard, which was deployed along the rear, would not permit the cannoners to return to the front, because they were not armed!

As soon as the line described was established General

Hancock had an interview with Generals Gibbon and Gregg and Major Driver, acting on behalf of Miles, during which the latter two promptly offered to retake their lost positions, believing that the effects of the panic had now been sufficiently overcome to enable them to bring up enough troops¹ to do this. But inasmuch as General Gibbon positively stated that he could not retake his part of the works, the commander of the corps decided that it would be unwise to send Gregg and Miles forward, and therefore confined his efforts to holding the position he then occupied, announcing to his division commanders that as soon as night came he should retire. General O. B. Willcox, with his division of the Ninth Corps, was known to be coming up from the rear; but night was fast closing in, and the commander of the Second Corps, though deeply stung and humiliated by the events of the late afternoon, saw no possibility of renewing to advantage a battle which should never have been fought.

I quote the following from General Morgan's account :

"It is not surprising that General Hancock was deeply stirred by the situation, for it was the first time he had felt the bitterness of defeat during the war. He had seen his troops fail in their attempts to carry the intrenched positions of the enemy; but he had never before had the mortification of seeing them driven, and his lines and guns taken, as on this occasion." . . . Never before had he seen his men fail to respond to the utmost when he had called upon them personally for a supreme

¹ Lieutenant-Colonel Joseph S. Smith, chief commissary of subsistence, here rendered useful services, for which he received the brevet of colonel.

² In the disaster of the 22d of June Hancock was not in command.

effort ; nor had he ever before ridden toward the enemy followed by a beggarly array of a few hundred stragglers who had been gathered together and again pushed toward the enemy. He could no longer conceal from himself that his once mighty corps retained but the shadow of its former strength and vigor. Riding up to one of his staff, in Werner's battery, covered with dust and begrimed with powder and smoke, he placed his hand upon the staff officer's shoulder and said : ' Colonel, I do not care to die, but I pray to God I may never leave this field. ' ”

To Miles was assigned the covering of the retreat, until Willcox's division, which had arrived within a mile and a half of the field, should be passed, when this was to become the rear guard. Colonel McAllister, with two brigades of Mott's division, was at the junction of the Jerusalem Plank Road with the Reams' Station Road.

The movement was already in progress when, at 7.30 P.M., a despatch was sent by General Meade, the first use made by Army Headquarters of the telegraph since the line was completed at 11.45 A.M., directing a withdrawal. At 10.30 P.M. General Meade informed General Hancock that General Crawford with his own division of the Fifth Corps and White's division of the Ninth, would, if desired, move down the plank road, pick up McAllister's two brigades at the junction of that road with the Reams' Station Road and with this force, some six thousand in number, cover Hancock's retreat.

But there was no occasion to draw troops so far away from the lines, to cover the withdrawal of the Second Corps. The enemy, who had shown no extraordinary spirit in following up their first great advantage, gained before six o'clock, made no attempt to pursue. Gregg's

cavalry remained on the field, where they had been when night fell. Hill had commenced withdrawing his troops at dark, owing to Lee's unwillingness to leave his Petersburg intrenchments any longer without their reserves.

Hill reported his loss at 730. He claimed the capture of seven standards and nine cannon. Our own loss was very small as an excuse for abandoned works, broken lines, and captured guns. Of the infantry, artillery, and staff, 157 were killed and 427 wounded. Of the killed, 21 were commissioned officers. The missing¹ reached 1,982, making the total losses of the two infantry divisions, the artillery, and the staff, 2,566.

The following officers were killed or mortally wounded:

Major Edward A. Springstead and Captains Nathaniel Wright and James Kennedy, Seventh New York Heavy Artillery.

Major John B. Donnelly and Captain James H. Keeley, One Hundred and Seventieth New York.

Captain Edward B. Brownson, United States Volunteers: Commissary of Musters, Second Corps.

Captains James R. Nichols and William H. Hawley, and Lieutenant James M. Moore, Fourteenth Connecticut.

Captains Samuel Taggart and Garrett Nowlen, One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania.

Captain Francis Whelpley and Lieutenant Daniel Sweeney, Sixty-ninth New York Militia (One Hundred and Eighty-second Volunteers).

Captain Edward Pelouze and Lieutenant M. O'Connell, One Hundred and Fifty-fifth New York.

Captain James Maginnis and Lieutenant Charles H. West, Eighth New York Heavy Artillery.

¹ Among the missing was the Assistant Adjutant-General of the corps, who, in carrying orders to the skirmishers after dark, rode through a gap in the line and was captured.

Captain James M. McKeel and Lieutenant Icabod P. Flannagan, Fourth New York Heavy Artillery.

Captain Theodore F. Rich, Thirty-ninth New York.

Captain E. C. Hanthorn, Seventh West Virginia.

Lieutenant James S. Stratton and John R. Rich, Twelfth New Jersey.

Lieutenant Henry B. Ginty, Thirty-sixth Wisconsin.

Lieutenant David G. Ralston, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Henry D. Brower, Twelfth New York independent battery.

Lieutenants E. C. Hoover and Peter McGee, Eighty-first Pennsylvania.

Before midnight General Meade, like the true-hearted gentleman he was, had not failed to send the following kindly and consolatory despatch :

HEADQUARTERS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC,

11 P.M., August 25, 1864.

DEAR GENERAL : No one sympathizes with you more than I do in the misfortunes of this evening. McEntee gave me such good accounts of affairs, up to the time he left, and it was then so late, I deferred going to you as I intended. If I had had any doubt of your ability to hold your lines from a direct attack, I would have sent Willcox, with others, down the railroad ; but my anxiety was about your rear and my apprehension was that they would either move around your left or intervene between you and Warren. To meet the first contingency I sent Willcox down the plank road, and for the second I held Crawford and White ready to move and attack. At the same time I thought it likely, after trying you, they might attack Warren, and wished to leave him until the last moment some reserves. I am satisfied you and your command have done all in your power, and though you have met with a reverse, the honor and escutcheon of the old Second is as bright as ever, and will, on some future occasion, prove it is only when

enormous odds are brought against them that they can be moved.

Don't let this matter worry you, because you have given me every satisfaction.

Truly yours,

(Signed,)

GEORGE G. MEADE,

Major-General.

Major-General HANCOCK,

Commanding Second Corps.

Comments upon the painful affair which has been recited are hardly needed.

First : It should have been decided, before the evening of the 24th, whether to withdraw Hancock by positive order, or to reinforce him heavily. Nothing was to be gained by a mere duel between Hancock's command and an equal number of Confederates.

Second : But the numbers engaged were not equal ; and Army Headquarters were strangely ignorant of Hancock's strength. In conversation with General Mott on the morning of August 26th, General Meade stated that Hancock had had from sixteen to twenty thousand¹ troops at his command. Hancock's own statement is 6,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry.

The force "present for duty" in the two divisions of infantry had been, on July 31st : First Division, 4,119 officers and men ; Second Division, 3,660 officers and men

¹ I have a letter from General Mott detailing this conversation. Now, in order to reduce this to even an extravagant statement of Hancock's force would require the inclusion of Willcox's and McAllister's troops. Calling these, as a maximum, 3,500, we should have Hancock's strength 12,000, instead of sixteen to twenty thousand. But to include Willcox and McAllister's troops among those at Hancock's command, for the purposes of fighting, at 5.30 to 6 P.M. of August 25th, is altogether unreasonable. Willcox states that he passed the Gurley House at half-past three o'clock, having still eight or nine miles to march.

—total 7,779 officers and men. The losses in these divisions, during the second Deep Bottom, had been 656. The loss by sickness and straggling during the fearful race from Strawberry Plains to Reams' must have reached many hundreds. It would be safe to say that Hancock could not possibly have had exceeding six thousand five hundred infantry "present for duty," as that term is used in army returns.

The enemy's force is not exactly known. General Humphreys gives eight brigades as engaged, viz.: McGowan's, Lane's, and Scales', of Wilcox's division; Anderson, of Field's; Cook and McRae's of Heth's, and two brigades ¹ of Mahone's.

Hampton was present in strong force, with two divisions of cavalry and mounted infantry, considerably outnumbering our cavalry, and participating actively on the assault upon our left. In a letter to me, General Hampton says that he cannot state his force, but he presumes it to have been three thousand or three thousand five hundred.

Third: But the situation, on the night of the 24th of August, presented the rarest opportunity of the campaign to strike Lee a severe blow.

A concentration of sixteen or twenty thousand troops at Reams', by noon of the 25th of August, would almost certainly have had results very different from those which, in general, attended our movements to the left. In those movements, our troops, proceeding through strange country, densely wooded, by dubious and devious paths, toward vaguely conjectured points, were delayed and thrown into confusion by the obstacles they encountered. The enemy, moving under cover, with

¹ Saunders' and Weisinger's.

secrecy and celerity, and by shorter and well-known paths, and being much better marchers than our troops, were able to get in ahead of us, almost every time, and, at some point or other, to slip in between our disconcerted and bewildered columns, or around our flanks, and thus baffle and disconcert the projected movements.

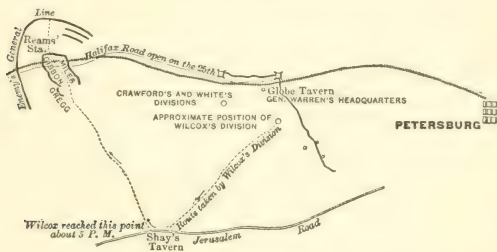
On the occasion we are considering, upon the other hand, the troops sent to reinforce the two divisions of the Second Corps might have proceeded, by a short, direct, and easy route, the Halifax Road, to find their friends already in position, with a country in front which had been searched in every direction for miles by our cavalry, and with no small part of which the infantry and staff had become familiar through the 23d and 24th. With such a disposition of our forces, the opportunity would have been afforded for inflicting a stunning repulse upon Hill's column and following it up most effectively.

Fourth: But, leaving all question as to whether a concentration of troops should not have taken place during the night of the 24th, and viewing the situation as it presented itself as late as noon of the 25th, the fact that the troops which were despatched to Hancock's relief were sent twelve miles around by the Jerusalem Plank Road, instead of being marched directly down the Halifax Road, where the distance would have been but four miles, constitutes a strange feature in this series of operations.

Fifth: I have already adverted sufficiently to the most unfortunate location of the line of works which General Hancock found on his arrival at Reams', which were occupied without any serious expectation of a battle.

Sixth: But whatever may be said as to what might

or should have been done otherwise on the evening of the 24th or the forenoon or early afternoon of the 25th, the fact remains undisputed and indisputable, and freely confessed by the commander of the Second Corps, that the infantry engaged, with few exceptions, did much less than their duty. Worn out by excessive exertions, cut up in a score of charges against intrenched positions, their better officers and braver sergeants and men nearly all killed or in hospital, regiments reduced to a captain's command, companies often to a corporal's guard—this was the state to which one hundred days of continuous



campaigning, on the avowed policy of "hammering," had reduced the old divisions of Richardson and Sedgwick.

Could the killed and wounded officers of but one-half hour's fighting at Cold Harbor have been called back to the Second Corps on the afternoon of the 25th of August, Heth might have charged till the sun went down, and all to no purpose. Had Tyler, Brooke, McKeen, Haskell, McMahon, Byrnes, Morris, and Porter, stood over the skeleton regiments at Reams', the northwest angle would not have been carried, and Hill would have gone back to his intrenchments with none but his own colors and guns.

But this was not to be the end of the history of the body of troops whose worst defeat has been thus frankly recounted.

The Second Corps, which as we behold it at Reams' seems like the gladiator of the marble poem, on whose clammy brow are gathered the dews of death, from whose wounded side ooze strength and courage, whose sword lies as it dropped from his nerveless hand, was yet again to rise, under the healing touch of time, powerful, valiant, and victorious. With scores of its best approved commanders, hundreds of its tried captains and subalterns, and thousands upon thousands of its veteran soldiers returning from the wounds with which they had fallen, strewing the ground from the Wilderness to the Weldon Road; with rest for the jaded and the wholesome discipline of the camp for the recruit—the Second Corps was again to lead the charge or sustain the furious assault with all its pristine courage and resolution; its guns were yet to thunder on Lee's retreating columns; its infantry to head the chase with almost the speed of cavalry; and the old First and Second Divisions were, at the White Oak Road, at Sailor's Creek and at Farmville, to protest, with their best blood, that Reams' Station was but a nightmare and a hideous dream.

SEPTEMBER AND OCTOBER, 1864.

After the return from Reams' Station, the First and Second Divisions were chiefly engaged in completing a formidable line of defensive works, which Grant had ordered to be constructed to protect his left rear. Mott's division, the Third, meanwhile occupied the intrenchments from the Strong House to the Norfolk Railroad. On the night of the 9th of September General Mott,

having been instructed by Hancock to obtain possession of the enemy's rifle-pits, at a point known as "The Chimneys," on the Jerusalem Plank Road, made preparations for what proved to be one of the most creditable operations of the siege, in which the Twentieth Indiana and the Second United States Sharpshooters, both under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel George W. Meikel, of the former regiment, and the Ninety-ninth Pennsylvania, under Colonel Biles, deservedly won great praise.

The enemy's intrenched line was carried by a rush with the bayonet, and the works were "reversed" for our occupation. The operation was completely successful, everything being done that was attempted, and with greater numerical loss to the enemy than to ourselves. Among the Union losses, however, was one severely felt, Lieutenant-Colonel Meikel falling in the moment of victory. Lieutenant George W. Ellsler, of the Ninety-ninth Pennsylvania, was also killed. The conduct of the action was highly creditable to Generals Mott and De Trobriand; and our troops subsequently derived much advantage from the occupation of the captured ground.

In the last days of September Generals Warren and Parke, with the Fifth and Ninth Corps, undertook that movement still further to the left which resulted in the capture of the enemy's intrenchments at Peebles' Farm, and in the permanent extension of our investing lines. October 1st Mott's division of the Second Corps supported Parke on his left, but was not engaged. The First and Second Divisions had gone into the intrenchments.

Mott's division returned on the 5th of October, and resumed its position on the front line. The First Division occupied the line in front of Petersburg, from Fort Spring Hill to Fort Meikel (named in honor of the gal-

lant officer who had fallen on the 10th of September), until the 5th of October, when it was relieved by the Second Division. The First Division then held the line from Fort Morton to the river, with reserves in rear of Forts Haskell (named in honor of the colonel of the Thirty-sixth Wisconsin) and Sullivan. In these positions the troops remained until the movement to the Boydton Plank Road, in the latter part of October.

Before proceeding to the narrative of that expedition, let us review the changes of the past three months in the organization, *personnel*, and strength of the Second Corps.

The following had been the organization of the corps, September 30, 1864.

Artillery Reserve, Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. Hazard, commanding.

FIRST DIVISION, BRIGADIER-GENERAL N. A. MILES.

First Brigade, Colonel James C. Lynch (One Hundred and Eighty-third Pennsylvania), commanding.

Second and Third Brigades (consolidated), Lieutenant-Colonel James E. McGee (Sixty-ninth New York), commanding.

Fourth Brigade, Lieutenant-Colonel William Glenny (Sixty-fourth New York), commanding.

SECOND DIVISION, MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN GIBBON.

First Brigade, Brigadier-General Thomas W. Egan, commanding.

Second Brigade, Colonel Matthew Murphy (Sixty-ninth New York Militia), commanding.

Third Brigade, Colonel Thomas A. Smyth (First Delaware), commanding.

THIRD DIVISION, BREVET MAJOR-GENERAL GER-SHOM MOTT.

First Brigade, Brigadier-General R. de Trobriand, commanding.

Second Brigade, Brigadier-General Byron R. Pierce, commanding.

Third Brigade, Colonel Robert McAllister (Eleventh New Jersey), commanding.

Comparison of the corps roster with that for June 30th shows that, in addition to the reduction of many organizations to battalions of fewer than ten companies, many regiments had been lost entire to the Second Corps. These were :

Second Delaware, Companies A to G mustered out : Peter McCullough, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Companies H, I, and K, with recruits and veterans, transferred to the First Delaware.

Fifteenth Massachusetts mustered out : George C. Joslin, Lieutenant-Colonel ; I. Harris Hooper, Major ; veterans and recruits to the Twentieth Massachusetts.

Sixteenth Massachusetts mustered out : Samuel W. Richardson, Major.

Forty-Second New York mustered out : William A. Lynch, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Patrick J. Downing, Major ; veterans and recruits to the Fifty-ninth New York.

Eighty-second New York mustered out : Thomas W. Baird, Major ; veterans and recruits to the Fifty-ninth New York.

Seventy-First New York mustered out : Henry L. Potter, Colonel ; Thomas Rafferty, Lieutenant-Colonel ; veterans and recruits to the One Hundred and Twentieth New York.

Seventy-Second New York mustered out : John S.

Austin, Colonel; John Leonard, Lieutenant-Colonel; Caspar K. Abell, Major; veterans and recruits to the One Hundred and Twentieth New York.

Seventy-Fourth New York mustered out: William H. Lounsbury, Lieutenant-Colonel; Lovell Purdy, Jr., Major; veterans and recruits to the Fortieth New York.

Sixty-Third Pennsylvania mustered out, John A. Danks, Colonel; veterans and recruits to the Ninety-ninth Pennsylvania.

Seventy-second Pennsylvania mustered out: D. W. C. Baxter, Colonel; Henry A. Cook, Lieutenant-Colonel; veterans and recruits transferred mainly to the One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania—some to the Sixty-ninth.

A glance at the foregoing list will show what a wreck the failure to fill up, from time to time, the original regiments of 1861 was now making of some of the most famous brigades of the Potomac Army. We have previously seen the Seventieth New York mustered out; and we now see the names of the Seventy-first, Seventy-second, Seventy-fourth, dropped from the lists of the corps, leaving but one regiment, the Seventy-third, to represent Sickles' "Excelsior Brigade." The Fifteenth Massachusetts and Eighty-second New York carry away one-half of Gorman's original brigade. In our review of June 30th we saw the Seventy-first Pennsylvania leave the Army of the Potomac for muster out; we now see the Seventy-second depart, leaving only the Sixty-ninth and One Hundred and Sixth to represent the old Philadelphia brigade.

The following changes among field officers occurred during the three months of July, August, and September, in addition to those mentioned in the muster out of regiments.

DISCHARGED.—In July, Lieutenant-Colonel John Hastings, Seventh New York Heavy Artillery; Major Michael D. Smith, One Hundred and Sixty-fourth New York; Major A. C. Supplee, Seventy-second Pennsylvania. In September, Colonel John S. Crocker, Ninety-third New York, Brevet Brigadier-General; Colonel Francis M. Cummins, One Hundred and Twenty-fourth New York; Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas H. Talbot, First Maine Heavy Artillery, Brevet Brigadier-General; Lieutenant-Colonel Lemuel Saviers, Twenty-sixth Michigan; Major Virgil M. Healey, Eighth New Jersey; Major James B. Coit, Fourteenth Connecticut, Brevet Brigadier-General.

RESIGNED.—In July, Colonel William J. Sewall, Fifth New Jersey; Colonel Thomas R. Tannatt, First Massachusetts Heavy Artillery; Lieutenant-Colonel Richard C. Bentley, Sixty-third New York.

MUSTERED OUT.—In July, Major Emmons F. Fletcher, Fortieth New York. In August, Major Ashabel W. Angell, Fifth New Jersey. (Major Angell had served with great credit throughout the campaign as topographical officer on General Hancock's staff.) In September, Lieutenant-Colonel Augustus J. Warner, Fortieth New York; Major Frederick Cooper, Seventh New Jersey.

PROMOTED.—July 1st, Colonel Selden Connor, Nineteenth Maine, to be Brigadier-General. September 3d, Colonel Thomas W. Egan, Fortieth New York, to be Brigadier-General; Major John W. Moore, Ninety-ninth Pennsylvania, to be Colonel of the Two Hundred and Third Pennsylvania in another command.

DISMISSED THE SERVICE.—In July, Major William A. McKay, Second New York Heavy Artillery. In August, Lieutenant-Colonel Richard E. Cross, Fifth New Hampshire.

The aggregate of the corps on the 31st of July had been 46,377 ; on the 31st of August, 45,021 ; on the 30th of September this had risen, owing to the arrival of large numbers of recruits, to 46,844. The "present for duty" had been, in July, 14,857 ; in August, 13,233 ; in September, 17,111.

About the close of August General Rufus Ingalls was appointed on the staff of the lieutenant-general, as Chief Quartermaster of the United Armies of the Potomac and the James ; and Colonel Richard N. Batchelder was announced as Chief Quartermaster of the Army of the Potomac. Colonel Batchelder's services to the Second Corps, since 1862, had been of a character eminently to merit this high position.

Captain H. H. Bingham, One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania, who had long served on the corps staff with conspicuous gallantry and efficiency, was promoted to be Major and Judge Advocate.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE BOYDTON PLANK ROAD.

THE Boydton Plank Road expedition, toward the end of October, 1864, was the last effort made by General Grant to reach the South Side Railroad before winter should close in upon the armies confronting each other upon the Appomattox and the James.

On the 25th of October orders were issued from Headquarters, Army of the Potomac, from which the following paragraphs are extracted :

“ 2. On the afternoon of the 26th instant (Wednesday) Major General Hancock, commanding Second Corps, will move the divisions of his corps, now in reserve, to the Vaughan Road, just outside the line of rear intrenchments. At 2 A.M. of the 27th General Hancock will move by the Vaughan Road, cross Hatcher's Run, pass by Dabney's Mill, and Wilson's and Arnold's steam saw-mill, on the Boydton Plank Road ; cross the open country to Claiborne's Road, near its intersection with the White Oak Road, and, recrossing Hatcher's Run near the Claiborne Road bridge, will take the road running northeast from the vicinity of the bridge to the South Side Railroad, and endeavor to seize a commanding position on that road. In this operation General Gregg's cavalry will form part of General Hancock's command and will move on his left ; General Hancock will probably be able to reach the Boydton Plank Road by

the time General Parke attacks the enemy's right between Claypole's and Hatcher's Run.

"3. General Gregg will concentrate his cavalry on the afternoon of the 26th instant (Wednesday), at some point toward the left convenient for crossing Hatcher's Run by the first route below that used by Hancock's infantry, and which shall not disclose the movement to the observation of the enemy.

"General Gregg will move, on the morning of the 27th, not later than two o'clock, cross Hatcher's Run below the Second Corps, and move on the left of the infantry, probably using the Quaker Road as far as the Boynton Plank. His route must be governed by that of the Second Corps.

"4. Major-General Parke, commanding Ninth Corps, will move at such hour on the morning of the 27th as will enable him to attack the right of the enemy's infantry between Hatcher's Run and their new works at Hawke's and Dabney's at the dawn of day.

"It is probable that the enemy's line of intrenchments is incomplete at that point; and the commanding general expects, by a secret and sudden movement, to surprise them and carry their half-formed works. General Parke will therefore move and attack vigorously at the time named, not later than half-past five, and, if successful, will follow up the enemy closely, turning toward the right. Should he not break the enemy's line, General Parke will remain confronting them until the operations on the left draw off the enemy.

"5. Major-General Warren, commanding Fifth Corps, will, if practicable, move simultaneously with the Ninth Corps, and proceed to the crossing of Hatcher's Run below the plank road bridge, from which point he will support the Ninth Corps, and, if the attack is suc-

cessful, follow up the enemy on the left of the Ninth Corps.

"Should General Parke fail to break the enemy's line, General Warren will cross Hatcher's Run, and endeavor to turn the enemy's right, by recrossing at the first practicable point above the Boynton Plank Road, keeping on the right of Hancock.

"He will then turn toward the plank road and open the plank road bridge.

"6. The ammunition wagons, extra caissons, intrenching tools, medicine and hospital wagons and forage wagons, allowed with the troops, will not accompany them on the morning of the 27th, but will be left parked at the most secure point near their bivouacs, and will be brought up at such time during the day as may be found best. The ambulances will accompany the troops.

"7. The troops will take four days' full rations on the person, counting from Thursday morning, the 27th. Sixty rounds of ammunition will be taken on the person. Forty rounds of infantry ammunition and one-half the small arms ammunition of the cavalry will be taken on wagons. In addition to the artillery ammunition carried in the limber chest and caisson, fifty additional rounds will be taken for each twelve-pound gun, to be carried in the caissons of the guns in the enclosed works. Not more than one forage and one battery wagon will be taken for every twelve guns.

"One-half the ambulances, with all the stretchers, will accompany the troops, and one medicine and one hospital wagon for each brigade.

"The intrenching tools will be taken. No baggage or headquarter wagons will be allowed, but instead, such pack animals as may be absolutely necessary for the rations and tents of officers.

“10. Every man on detached, special, extra, or daily duty that can be temporarily placed in the ranks for an emergency, will be armed and equipped, and sent to the ranks for this operation. The commanding general requests the earnest attention of corps commanders to this point.”

THE EXPEDITION.

On the afternoon of the 26th the two divisions—Mott's Third, and Egan's Second—of the Second Corps, embraced in the foregoing order, in number between six thousand five hundred and seven thousand men, moved out, the latter leading, along the rear line of our intrenchments, to the Weldon Railroad, bivouacking near Fort Du Chesne. The hour of march was changed from 2 A.M. to 3.30 A.M., at General Hancock's request, inasmuch as it was known that the Vaughan Road was obstructed, and the crossing of Hatcher's Run held by the enemy in breastworks, so that confusion would be likely to result from attempting to clear these obstacles in the night. At 3.30 A.M. Egan moved out, closely followed by Mott. Gregg, who had bivouacked near the infantry, moved at the same hour on the Halifax Road. The enemy's vedettes were encountered on the Vaughan Road, but did not contest our advance, the only material delay being caused by the obstructions found in the road. Egan pushed forward so energetically that by daylight he was ready to attempt the crossing of Hatcher's Run. The stream at that point was waist-deep. Trees had been felled in it to make the approach more difficult. Smyth's brigade was deployed and advanced in fine style, carrying the works at a run; but, small as the enemy's force was, they had such secure cover to fire

from that our loss was upward of fifty men. Among the killed was Lieutenant-Colonel Spalter, Fourth Ohio, commanding the skirmish line. As soon as Egan had crossed the stream, he pushed forward to Dabney's Mill, where his skirmishers captured Major Venable, of the staff of the Confederate cavalry. By this time the hour fixed for Parke's attack had passed, and General Hancock felt some uneasiness at not hearing his guns, knowing that his own small column could effect nothing if the enemy were permitted to concentrate against it. Mott followed the Vaughan Road for a mile or so, and then marched by a cross road to Dabney's Mill. Gregg had driven the enemy before him rapidly, and the welcome sound of his guns was now heard upon the left. The infantry pushed on toward the Boynton Road, arriving in sight of it just as the rear of a Confederate wagon train was crossing the bridge at Burgess' Mill.

The enemy at once opened fire on Hancock's column, with a section of artillery, from the hill on the south side of the run, near Burgess' tavern; while another section opened from the left, in the direction of the White Oak Road. The guns in front were soon silenced by Beck's battery, C and I, Fifth United States, which, at this point, lost Lieutenant Thomas Burns, a valuable officer, mortally wounded.

General Hancock did not deem it prudent to continue his march to the White Oak Road while any of the enemy remained south of Hatcher's Run; and he accordingly directed Egan to push toward the bridge and drive everything across. Gregg was now coming up by the Quaker Road, and one of his brigades was sent forward to Egan, whereupon Mott, with the Third Division, was directed to advance toward White Oak Bridge. Before his column was well under way, how-

ever, General Hancock received an order from General Meade requiring him to halt at the plank road; and a few minutes later Generals Grant and Meade came upon the field, the latter informing General Hancock that Crawford's division, Fifth Corps, was working its way up the run; and requesting General Hancock to extend his line to the right in order to make connection with Crawford's troops. Let us now turn back across the run, near the bend, and see what had occurred since the time arrived for Parke to attack the enemy's extreme right.

It will have been observed that the text of the order explicitly states the belief of headquarters that the enemy's works were not yet extended to Hatcher's Run; or that if such a line had been marked out, the intrenchments were as yet incomplete. It was here, between "Hawk's and Dabney's" and Hatcher's Run, about two miles, or two and one-half miles, to the southwest, that Parke was to attack.

On moving, in the early morning, Parke found the enemy's works extended much farther to the south and east than was supposed. Badeau says: "Instead of the rebel line being unfinished, and altogether north of Hatcher's Run, it was found to extend east of the stream and below the bend, nearly to Armstrong's Mill, a distance of at least two miles."

Parke not only found the enemy's line in a very different position from that indicated, but he found it thoroughly fortified, with slashing and abattis in front, and well manned. The Ninth Corps therefore came to a stand, all that remained for it, according to the original instructions, being to confront the enemy in their works, "until the operations on the left (should) draw off the enemy," in which case Parke was, presumably, to attack.

The alternative plan now came up for execution. This

was to leave Parke confronting the newly discovered works, and throw Warren across the run, leaving him to hold the Boynton Road, and presumably to seize the plank road bridge, while Hancock, upon his left, should move out the White Oak Road and attempt the South Side Railroad.

It will be seen that the enterprise in contemplation was not only much less considerable than that of throwing three corps upon the enemy's right and into his rear, but that it had much less chance of success; first, because the active force was reduced from three corps to two, and secondly, because so much time had been lost, during which a vigilant and daring enemy was making dispositions to meet the impending blow.

Reduced in scope and possible importance as was the new enterprise, it was, by the action of General Meade and General Grant in person, soon reduced, as we have seen, to almost trivial importance. Instead of pushing Warren, as fast as possible, across the river, with all his force—throwing upon Parke the responsibility of holding the enemy along the whole line east and north of the run; throwing upon Warren the responsibility of holding the whole territory embraced within the angle of the stream, including the bridge at Burgess' Mill; and thus leaving Hancock, with his two divisions of infantry and Gregg's cavalry division, foot-free, to strike at the railroad—instead of this, General Meade informed Hancock that one division only, Crawford's, of Warren's corps, was to be thrown across the run; that this division was to move up along the run, its right flank resting thereon; that connection was to be made and maintained between Hancock and Crawford; and that further movement to the left was suspended.

What might be hoped for from the new dispositions

was this : That Crawford might touch the enemy's extreme right and compel the abandonment of the positions held by them, on the east bank, in front of Parke and Warren, whose troops, or a part of them, might then cross, and, in conjunction with Hancock, push into the Confederate rear. In this view, of course, everything depended upon Crawford's prompt advance. There was still a third possibility of the situation, which was that Lee, feeling the heavy hand laid upon his line of supply, the Boydton Plank Road, on which Hancock was now established, should assume the offensive, and advance to strike the intruding force. This possibility, again, which was made a strong probability by the often and bitterly experienced audacity of the Confederates, rendered it doubly important that Crawford should lose no time in moving far enough forward to make connection with Hancock.

Promptly on being advised of the change of plan, Hancock opened communication with Crawford, in order to secure the communication and co-operation intended. At 1.10 P.M. Major Bingham, of his staff, was despatched to find the position of Crawford, whose time of crossing is fixed by Badeau at 11.45 A.M. General Crawford was at a house which, in his conversation with Major Bingham, he designated as the Arnold House. General Crawford indicated upon the map a point which he expected soon to reach, whereupon he intended to throw his left around and connect with the right of the Second Corps.

It will appear, then, that the responsibility of making the communication rested upon Crawford. Hancock, already engaged with the enemy at Burgess' Mill, was not to retire to join Crawford. Crawford was to come forward from the rear, and place himself on Hancock's

right. At the same time Hancock did everything in his power to anticipate Crawford's movements. He placed a brigade well out on his own right and caused skirmishers to be deployed still farther, to cover, as much as possible, the position which Crawford was to assume.

While these dispositions were making, under apprehension of trouble on our right flank, the enemy, consisting mainly, if not wholly, of dismounted cavalry in large numbers, were showing considerable activity on Hancock's front and left. They dashed forward, here and there, with great spirit, and at one time sought to carry Beck's four guns, only retiring when served with cannister. To this Hancock was now determined to put a stop, and Egan was ordered to drive the enemy across the run, which was done by a charge of Smyth's brigade. In thus pushing the enemy across the stream a gun, with caisson, was taken by Captain Burke of the One Hundred and Sixty-fourth New York Volunteers, but was subsequently left upon the field, disabled. In the successive advances up the Boydton Road, from the point where the Second Corps, coming in from Dabney's Mill, first struck it, Captain A. H. Embler, of the Second Division staff, had been conspicuous for the gallantry and address with which he directed the skirmish line.

Egan now held the bridge-head, and occupied our front with Rugg's brigade on the left, Smyth's brigade in the centre, and Willett's brigade upon the right. Such was our front line. On the left, toward the White Oak Road, lay one of Mott's brigades, with a brigade of cavalry.

Now the enemy's artillery, having been heavily reinforced, opened a terrific fire, making the whole space occupied by our troops alive with shot and shell. From the high ground across the bridge nine guns, as nearly

tertainment was to be still further varied by a fire directly from the rear up the Boydton Road ; but at this time the enemy had not established themselves in Hancock's rear.

So annoying was the enfilading fire obtained by the battery out the White Oak Road, that General Gregg was directed to capture or drive it away. A preliminary reconnoissance, however, satisfied that officer that the guns were protected by infantry in hastily constructed breastworks, and consequently he did not advance against them. I am disposed to think that Gregg encountered only dismounted cavalry ; but this was largely superior to his own in numbers.

Beck had, at this time, four of his guns in position to reply to the fire from across the run ; and with these he maintained the unequal contest most gallantly, losing ten men, until relieved by Granger's Tenth Massachusetts Battery, to enable him to replenish his ammunition. Lieutenant Smith of the latter battery was first killed, and, at a later hour, Lieutenant Granger. The action of the Tenth was unusually spirited. One section of Beck's battery, under Lieutenant Metcalf, had been placed in position upon a secondary ridge about half-way between Mott and Egan, from which position it was able to reach, though at long range, the enemy's battery toward the White Oak bridge. Pierce's brigade, of Mott's division, was placed in support of this section.

At this time General Grant and Meade were with Hancock in front of Burgess' Mill, on the Boydton Road. The appearance and action of the commander in chief are thus described by Badeau : "Grant rode out into an open field, to get a nearer view of the position, his own staff officers and those of Meade, with a crowd of orderlies, following. The number of horsemen made a conspicuous mark for the rebel batteries, and the group was

shelled ; one or two men were struck and one was killed. Officers of Meade and Hancock now came up to report the situation at the bridge ; several of Grant's own aides-de-camp were sent to reconnoitre ; and Hancock, who had been at the extreme front, also explained what he had seen. But the reports were conflicting ; and it seemed as if no eyes but his own could ascertain exactly what Grant wanted to know. Calling to Colonel Babcock, of his staff, he bade the others to remain where they were, and galloped down the road to within a few yards of the bridge, exposed not only to the enemy's sharpshooters, but to the cross fire of two rebel batteries. The telegraph wires had been cut, and the feet of his horse became entangled. Babcock was obliged to dismount and free them, while the officers at the rear looked on in suspense, and thought how many campaigns depended on the life that now was endangered. But the chief and his aide-de-camp rode on till Grant could clearly discern the rebel line, the condition of the country, the course of the stream, and the nature of the banks."

The result of General Grant's personal observations, and the conclusion at which he arrived with reference to the situation as he discerned it, are thus stated by Badeau, in immediate continuation of the paragraph just quoted :

" The rebels were evidently in force north of the creek, with strong defences. Their intrenched line extended far beyond the point at which it had been supposed to turn to the north, and when the national army advanced, Lee had simply moved out and occupied the works already prepared. The contemplated movement was thus impracticable. The rebel position could perhaps be carried, but only with extreme difficulty and loss

of life ; a loss which the advantage to be gained would not compensate, while in the event of repulse, disaster might be grave, stretched out as the army was, with its flanks six miles apart, and the creek dividing Warren's corps. Any serious rebuff or loss was especially to be deprecated at this crisis ; *the presidential election was only ten days off*, and the enemies of the nation at the north were certain to exaggerate every mishap. Success at the polls was just now even more important than a victory in the field, and it would have been most unwise to risk greatly on this occasion. Accordingly, when Grant returned from the bridge he gave orders to suspend the movement. Hancock was directed to hold his position till the following morning, and then withdraw by the same road along which he had advanced."

I have given this long extract without abridgment, in order that it may be seen how completely it was due to General Grant's own judgment that the further progress of the movement was suspended. Hancock had moved with great promptness, and it had even been necessary to halt him, to allow other troops to come up. Parke and Warren, on their part, had, indeed, taken much time to develop the enemy's real line, and to obtain the information on which Grant and Meade could act ; but it is not intimated that more time had been consumed in this way than was fairly involved in the nature of the country in which the operations took place. So that it comes to this, that the contemplated expedition to the South Side Railroad, October 27th, was virtually abandoned on the discovery that the enemy's line was not incomplete between Hawk's and Dabney's at the northeast and Hatcher's Run on the southwest. It is true that, even after this discovery, tentative operations were initiated for turning the enemy's right, by a movement across the

run and up the course of the stream ; but this was voluntarily abandoned by General Grant.

And thus, so far as the designs and expectations of headquarters were concerned, the movement was at an end by four o'clock of the afternoon, Hancock's withdrawal in the morning having been definitely ordered. But the events were yet to occur which should give the 27th of October a place, though not a chief place, among the red-letter days of the war, since the vigilant and daring enemy, finding Hancock's hand heavy upon his throat, was preparing, behind dense woods, to take the initiative, trusting to a single furious blow, of the sort so well known to the Army of the Potomac, to disconcert the intruding column and drive it back in disorder.

It has been related that, upon receipt of the information that Crawford had been directed to cross the stream and move up to Hancock's support, the latter officer had sent Major Bingham to open communication with the turning column and that this officer had brought back the intelligence that Crawford was then in Hancock's right rear, with the expressed intention of moving up and making close connection with the Second Corps. Meanwhile, being now in possession of the views of his superior officers, General Hancock deemed it important for the security of his position to seize the high ground beyond the run, and, for this purpose, directed General Egan (whose division occupied the crest of the hill near Burgess' Tavern) to make the necessary preparations, sending McAllister's brigade, of Mott's division, to him as a support. General Egan had everything in readiness for the attack ; a section of Granger's battery had been thrown forward and had opened fire, and the advance of the assaulting party had already pushed down to the

bridge, when a terrific volley of musketry upon the right, opposite Pierce's brigade, told that something startling was about to happen.

Let us explain the cause of this interruption. For an hour or more there had been firing at some distance upon the right, attributed to Crawford's advance, yet of a nature to excite General Hancock's apprehensions ; and, as a precaution, General Pierce had been instructed to send two regiments into the woods toward the firing to ascertain the cause. The regiments despatched were the Fifth Michigan and the Ninety-third New York, subsequently reinforced by the One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania. The First United States Sharpshooters were still further deployed toward the right and rear, to reach out toward Crawford.

The volley we have mentioned resulted from the unexpected encounter of the Fifth Michigan and Ninety-third New York with a large force of Confederate infantry, which, under the command of General Heth, had been despatched to meet Hancock's column. A portion of this force, consisting of two brigades under Mahone and of McRae's North Carolina Brigade, all under the personal direction of General Heth,¹ had crossed the run between Crawford and Hancock, and, marching by a wood-road through a dense forest toward the Boynton

¹ General Heth in a letter to General Hancock says : I crossed "just where my right rested on a dam I had previously built to back up the water toward the bridge at Burgess' Mill ; and, following an old blind wood-road, reached the point from which my attack on you was made, the result of which you know. I had no artillery in this attack ; could not have gotten guns over the road referred to without much trouble and cutting away trees and brush." Heth gives his force at "probably not less than four thousand five hundred ; certainly not exceeding five thousand."

Road, had come unannounced against Hancock's right and rear, where Crawford was expected to be.

Thus assailed, Pierce's regiments were speedily overlapped on both flanks and run over by superior numbers, so that they came back upon the remainder of the brigade, closely followed by the exulting enemy. The attack was made in such force, and came so suddenly, that Pierce's brigade had no time to change front in order to make head against it, but was forced back to the plank road before it could re-form. Lieutenant Metcalf had time to fire but a few rounds from his section before the enemy were upon him; he was himself wounded and captured, with his guns. Flushed with this success, the Confederates rushed forward at the double-quick toward the plank road, and, as soon as their right had crossed it, faced to the left (south) and opened fire. The sight that now met their gaze must have been a pleasing one, for it promised a rich harvest. The clearing in the angle between the plank road and the line of march of the Second Corps was filled with ambulances, led horses, and artillery.

But the victory was not to prove as easy as it promised. General Hancock, close at hand, exerted himself to form a line which should hold the enemy at the point they had gained, and as soon as possible to set a fire in their rear. Under his orders De Trobriand's brigade, which was so placed as to be in the most effective position for that purpose, advanced against Heth, while Pierce rallied his men along the plank road, and Roder's battery, extricating itself from the mass of ambulances, wagons, and led horses, came into action, quickly supported by Beck's remaining four guns, which had received some ammunition since being relieved by Granger. Colonel C. H. Smith's cavalry brigade dismounted in

haste and moved sharply up to take place in line with De Trobriand, and Colonel M. Kerwin's cavalry brigade, also dismounted, came handsomely into position on the other flank. Hancock threw himself, with his staff, between the two lines of battle, to lead the charge. But while these preparations were making, a strange confusion was observed in the enemy's ranks, some of their men facing about and firing to the rear; and, in a moment more, it was evident that their visions of spoils had faded, for they were making frantic efforts to escape. The cause of this sudden reverse is now to be explained.

At the first sound of the enemy's attack on Pierce Hancock sent Major Mitchell to General Egan, directing him to abandon the assault against the heights on the north bank of the stream, and to face about and assail the enemy. When Mitchell reached General Egan, he found that gallant officer, with the instinct of a true soldier, already in motion. It was quite evident that, in taking position on the secondary ridge and opening against Mott, the enemy were oblivious to the presence of Egan's troops, and when he burst upon their right and rear with Smyth's and Willett's brigades, of his own division, and McAllister's brigade, of Mott's, it must have been to them like a bolt from a clear sky. Two colors and many hundreds of prisoners were captured. When Major Mitchell attempted to return to General Hancock, after having delivered his message, he found the enemy in possession of the Boydton Plank Road. Hastily turning back and putting himself at the head of the Thirty-sixth Wisconsin Volunteers, of Rugg's brigade of the Second Division, Major Mitchell advanced upon the enemy and drove them from the road, capturing about two hundred prisoners and one color. The remainder of Rugg's

brigade did not advance, although it had orders to do so.¹

As soon as it was apparent to General Hancock that Egan had commenced his attack, he pushed forward De Trobriand's brigade, of Mott's division,² and Kerwin's brigade of dismounted cavalry. The repulse was assisted by a regiment of Mott's division, led by Major Willian, division inspector, which advanced from the extreme right of our lines. It is evident, however, that Egan's attack alone, would, under the circumstances, have resulted in the complete overthrow of the enemy, and Egan well earned the brevet of Major-General which he received. He was seconded by two very reliable and excellent brigade commanders, Smyth and McAllister. The two guns³ of Beck, which, under Lieutenant Metcalf,

¹ Lieutenant-Colonel Rugg was tried and convicted by court martial, and dismissed the service for neglect of duty and disobedience of orders. January 26, 1865, his disability consequent upon dismissal was removed. He did not, however, re-enter the service.

² The regiments especially mentioned by General Mott are the Fortieth New York, Twentieth Indiana, Ninety-ninth and One Hundred and Tenth Pennsylvania. The Seventeenth Maine had previously been despatched to anticipate any movement of the enemy to seize the Boydton Road farther down on the line of our communications.

³ The temporary capture of these two guns, which were almost immediately retaken amid the rout of the Confederate column, is magnified in General Lee's despatches to the Confederate Secretary of War into the capture of six guns which "could not be brought off, the enemy having possession of the bridge." There was another reason why the only two guns which the enemy touched during the day were not brought off, viz., that Heth's three brigades, in order to get away from Egan's troops, had to run faster than was consistent with hauling away cannon.

had been run over and temporarily captured in the headlong rush of the Confederates from the woods, were recaptured.

Nearly simultaneous with the enemy's attack on Pierce, they commenced pressing heavily upon our left, where Mott's skirmishers were very sharply engaged; and a number of men and several valuable officers were lost. Egan had hardly succeeded in breaking the lines charged by him when Hancock was obliged to send all of the dismounted cavalry back to Gregg. Hancock desired to send some infantry; but could not, as he momentarily expected a renewal of the fight in his front. The attack was not renewed by the enemy; nor did Hancock assume the aggressive, although General Lee's despatch to the Confederate Secretary of War on the 28th says, "In the attack subsequently made by the enemy, General Mahone broke three lines of battle." It is easy to conjecture who is responsible for the very large amount of poetry infused into General Lee's despatches regarding the Boydton Road, namely, the highly imaginative officer just mentioned. It deserves to be stated that one of Gregg's regiments, the First Maine Cavalry, Major S. W. Thaxter, was under orders to proceed home to be mustered out of service, but went voluntarily into action and behaved most handsomely.

Matters were a good deal mixed up on the field at the period now reached. The enemy were in force in Hancock's front, and their artillery was firing upon his troops from three directions; in fact, from all directions excepting the narrow road on which the corps had marched from Dabney's Mill and the Quaker Road. Hampton had pushed so far up the plank road in our rear that his shot passed entirely over Gregg's line, into our front line of infantry, which was engaged in an op-

posite direction. Renewed efforts were made at this time to reach General Crawford's right by extending our skirmish line, but without success. Colonel Rugg's brigade, excepting certain regiments of the skirmish line, was drawn over to the right of the plank road, the infantry being mainly concentrated on that side, in two lines of battle, in anticipation of a renewal of Heth's attack from the woods which Crawford had been expected to occupy. About 5 P.M. General Hancock despatched Major Bingham of his staff to communicate, if possible, with General Warren or Crawford. Unfortunately Bingham was captured; and though he escaped immediately after dark he failed to deliver his message. Strange to say, the firing at Boydton Road was not heard by General Warren, owing, probably, to the dense wood intervening and to the skirmishing on his own front. About 5.30 P.M. Hancock was informed by General Meade that the signal officers reported the enemy still concentrating against him, General Meade being at that time unaware of the action which had taken place since he left the field.

The question of remaining or withdrawing had now become very important; and Hancock's soldierly feeling caused him to leave the decision to the army commander. Having moved in the morning, by order, without his reserve ammunition (which had been directed to be placed on pack mules, to await the movement of the Ninth and Fifth Corps, and, in case of success, to be sent to General Hancock on the South Side Railroad), the conflicts of the day had so drained the amount on hand as seriously to cripple the troops. This was particularly the case with the cavalry and artillery. The only communication with the main body of the army was by the one narrow road through Dabney's Mill; and this

was not only seriously threatened by the enemy, but the rain was rapidly rendering it almost impassable, so that it became a question of doubt whether the ammunition could possibly be brought up and issued in time for a fight in the morning.

Before the return of his staff officer General Hancock was authorized by General Meade to withdraw during the night, if he thought proper to do so; but was informed that Ayers' division of the Fifth Corps had been sent to his support and was halted for the night at Armstrong's Mill. General Meade further informed Hancock that, if he could attack successfully in the morning, with the assistance of Ayers' and Crawford's divisions, it was desired that he should do so.

It is evident that these instructions only added to General Hancock's embarrassment, and made him feel more reluctant to abandon his position. On him was thrown the responsibility of deciding whether the reinforcements could be gotten up and the needed supplies of ammunition for his own troops be brought forward and issued in time for a battle at daylight; and yet these were matters which were in no degree under his control. Certainly, if no greater energy were to be displayed in getting ammunition and reinforcements during the night than had been displayed in pushing Crawford during the day, Hancock had reason to expect but little from this source. Moreover, General Meade sent word to General Hancock (by one of the latter's staff) that, if the principal part of the fighting the next morning was to be done by Ayers and Crawford, it was not desired that they should be ordered up. Now it was quite certain that, until the ammunition of Hancock's command could be replenished, Ayers and Crawford would be the main reliance, and, as they would occupy the road all night while moving up,

this would cause additional delay in procuring ammunition. Yet so much did General Hancock's soldierly pride rebel against leaving the field without positive orders to do so, and especially after reinforcements (on paper) had been placed at his disposal, that he determined to remain. At a later hour, however, he was compelled to adopt the other course, inasmuch as General Gregg, on coming back for a conference on the conclusion of his fight with Hampton, reported that his troops were nearly out of cartridges and that, owing to the intermingling of his regiments in the woods, the heavy rain and the extreme darkness of the night, he could not issue ammunition before daylight even if it should come up. This information, coming from one so steady and trustworthy as Gregg, determined Hancock to withdraw.

This course being decided upon, no time was to be lost, to ensure the safe execution of the movement. All the available ambulances were loaded with the wounded, one hundred and fifty-five being removed; but as it was impossible for the ambulances to return to the field by the one narrow road on which the troops were to march, it was unavoidable that some should be left behind.¹ So far as possible, in the darkness of the night, they

¹ Badeau (iii. 126) assails General Lee for reporting the capture of four hundred prisoners. "Hancock," he says "distinctly declared that he lost no prisoners in battle." I find no such statement in Hancock's report, while the appended list of "missing" considerably exceeds the number of prisoners claimed. Some of the missing were doubtless killed or wounded; others, doubtless, turned up at a later date; but Lee's claim appears not unreasonable. It would have been a wonder, indeed, if some prisoners had not been taken from Pierce's brigade, as well as, in smaller proportion, from other brigades of infantry and from the cavalry during the numerous movements and actions of the day.

were gathered into houses and barns and a competent surgeon detailed to remain with them. At 10 P.M. the order was given for the withdrawal to commence, and Mott moved out first, Egan following. The latter halted at Dabney's Mill till after daylight to protect the withdrawal of Crawford's division of Warren's corps. He then joined Mott's division, which had massed and waited for him after crossing Hatcher's Run, when both divisions returned to the lines in front of Petersburg.

The pickets were withdrawn about 1 A.M. on the 28th, under the direction of General De Trobriand, Corps Officer of the Day. By some oversight about seventy men, comprising detachments from the First Minnesota, Captain J. Farwell; Thirty-sixth Wisconsin Volunteers, Captain Fake; and Seventh Michigan, Captain La Pointe, were left on the picket line until the following morning. Though moving for some miles in the presence of the enemy this body of men got safely back to camp, through the skill and bravery of the officers commanding and the discipline and good conduct of the soldiers.

Gregg marched off the field by the Quaker Road about half-past ten o'clock. General H. E. Davies' brigade, which had, during the day, even when Gregg was hardest pressed, been held in reserve at the junction of the Quaker and Boynton Roads, on account of the vital importance of protecting our communications, became the rear-guard.

It must be confessed that the general plan for seizing the South Side Railroad completely failed; and it is not difficult to see the cause for the failure of this and similar plans involving a threat against the enemy's works by the bulk of the army and a flanking movement by a comparatively insignificant force. Such strategy enabled the enemy to realize the full worth of their intrench-

ments, by holding superior numbers in check with a comparatively small force ; while they concentrated against the flanking column a sufficient force to buffet it back, or at least to cripple its advance. The relative proportions of the opposing armies in the fall of 1864 was such that, had the flanking column on the Boydton Road consisted of two corps, instead of two divisions, Lee could hardly have held his lines.

Even as it was, had Crawford made any progress between the time he was first found by Major Bingham and the hour of Heth's attack, the force thrust over the run could scarcely have escaped annihilation. Why was Crawford not up on Hancock's right ? The excuse he gives is the nature of the country. I have not the text of Crawford's report ; but Badeau, who seems less disposed to Rhadamanthan severity, in dealing with the officers conducting the Boydton Road expedition, than is his wont, states the matter thus :

"The denseness of the woods and the crookedness of the run caused great delay, as well as breaks in the line and frequent changes of direction. There could be no guide to the movement but sound, and at one o'clock the troops on the eastern bank were ordered to open fire to show the position of the enemy's line. Crawford, also, lost time by mistaking a branch of the stream for the creek itself, and he found great difficulty in crossing the branch on account of the fallen timber cut by the enemy. His line of march had, by this time, led him into a very different position from that which he was expected to assume ; the forest was of great extent ; the men were losing themselves in all directions ; and whole regiments, unable to find the remainder of the division, went astray. In this emergency Warren ordered Crawford to halt while he went in person to consult with Meade."

It may be interesting to pass to the Confederate side and see how the operations of the 27th of October were viewed there. I have in my possession a letter from Major-General Heth, commanding one of A. P. Hill's divisions and actually in command of all the troops opposed to Parke, to Warren, or to Hancock during the day. "The grave error of the day committed on your side, in my opinion," says General Heth, "was that, after crossing Hatcher's Run and starting to march up, Crawford permitted himself to be stopped in [within ?] certainly half a mile or less, of my right flank. Hearing a force was moving up the run, on the west side, I hurriedly sent about fifty or seventy-five sharpshooters to find out definitely what this force consisted of, and to delay it as long as possible. Mind: all this occurred in dense woods. Crawford, not knowing the smallness of the force opposed to him, formed line of battle, and, I was informed, commenced to intrench. Had he pushed on, my flank would have been completely turned, and I would have been compelled to evacuate my works. About this time, or soon after Crawford's movement was checked, Mahone reported to me with two brigades of his division. *Convinced now that Parke would make no serious assault, and Crawford remaining quiet*, I withdrew one brigade, McRae's, from my lines, and, uniting it with Mahone's two brigades, I crossed over the river with this force," etc.

While the Second and Third Divisions of the Second Corps were engaged in the operations which have been described, upon the Boynton Road, the First Division, under Miles, was not idle. That enterprising officer was not content to stand inactive, and, although holding a line of works about three and one-half miles in length, he sent a storming party against the enemy's line near

the "Crater" on the night of the 27th, capturing a small work, with two field officers and a number of men. The storming party consisted of a portion of the One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania Volunteers, led by Captain Jerry Brown, of that regiment, and a gallant young Lieutenant Price, of the One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania Volunteers, then Acting Assistant Adjutant-General of Mulholland's brigade. Lieutenant Price was killed in the assault. The work was held for some time, but, as the movement was only intended as a diversion, the troops engaged were not strengthened, and when the enemy concentrated against them they were obliged to retire. Captain Brown was recommended for a brevet for his fine conduct in this affair. A second attack, on this same night, resulted in the capture of a portion of the enemy's picket line on the Jerusalem Plank Road. The attacking party in this instance was gallantly led by Colonel Burke, Eighty-eighth New York.

The following tabular statement shows the casualties occurring to the cavalry, infantry, and artillery engaged on the Boydton Road, under General Hancock, and to Miles' division engaged in front of Petersburg :

| Command. | Killed. | Wounded. | Missing. | Aggregate. |
|-----------------------|---------|----------|----------|------------|
| First Division | 4 | 25 | 38 | 67 |
| Second Division | 30 | 169 | 113 | 312 |
| Third Division | 57 | 366 | 403 | 826 |
| Artillery | 7 | 22 | 4 | 33 |
| Cavalry (Gregg) | 25 | 152 | 67 | 244 |
| Totals | 123 | 734 | 625 | 1,482 |
| Officers | 15 | 49 | 5 | 69 |
| Enlisted men | 108 | 685 | 620 | 1,413 |
| | 123 | 734 | 625 | 1,482 |

The following officers were killed or mortally wounded in this expedition :

Lieutenant-Colonel Frank J. Spalter, Fourth Ohio Battalion.

Major William F. Smith, First Delaware.

Captains Charles E. Patton and John C. Conser, One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania.

Captain Willard A. Musson, One Hundred and Fifty-second New York.

Captain James Chamberlain, One Hundred and Twentieth New York.

Captains David A. Granger and Alexander McTavish, Eleventh Massachusetts.

Captain James Finnegan, One Hundred and Twenty-fourth New York.

Captain Daniel Purdy, One Hundred and Fifty-fifth New York.

Lieutenants James F. McGinley (Adjutant) and Stewart A. Boyd, Fifth Michigan.

Lieutenant George W. Rector, Jr., Eighth New York Heavy Artillery.

Lieutenant Henry D. Price, One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Perkins Bartholomew, Fourteenth Connecticut.

Lieutenants Henry H. Granger and Asa Smith, Tenth Massachusetts Battery.

Lieutenant Thomas Burns, Fifth United States Artillery.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE WINTER SIEGE OF PETERSBURG.

THE Second and Third Divisions of the Second Corps, returning from the expedition to the Boydton Plank Road, took up again their work of garrisoning batteries and breastworks, relieving the First Division in the long line it had held during their absence, the latter division thereafter remaining in reserve. The month of November wore away without any movement, but not without a great and far-reaching change in the *personnel* of the corps. It was proposed to General Hancock by the Secretary of War that he should resign the command of the corps, and, returning to the North at a season when active operations would be largely prohibited by stress of weather, should undertake the organization of a new corps, to be composed entirely of veteran soldiers. It was believed that General Hancock's great popularity throughout the country, and especially through the Middle States, the prestige of his name, and the devotion felt for him by thousands of men who had honorably served through their terms of enlistment, but had from weariness or disgust, or from lack of a definite impulse, failed to re-enter the army, would enable the Government to bring into the campaign, at the beginning of 1865, a large body of exceptionally efficient troops, mainly if not altogether in addition to the ordinary fruits of recruiting. Accepting this duty in the spirit in which he discharged



MAJ.-GEN. ANDREW A. HUMPHREYS

Commanding Second Army Corps

NOVEMBER 25, 1864 TO JUNE 28, 1865



all his trusts and commissions since he left the quartermaster's camp at Los Angeles, General Hancock, on the 26th of November, left the Second Corps forever, turning over the command to Major-General Andrew A. Humphreys, until that time Chief of Staff to the Army of the Potomac.

General Hancock was, of course, accompanied by his personal staff—Major William G. Mitchell, Brevet Brigadier-General, and Captains W. D. W. Miller and Isaac B. Parker—than whom no more brave, energetic, and intelligent aides-de-camp ever served a general officer. Lieutenant-Colonel Charles H. Morgan, Brevet Brigadier-General and Assistant Inspector-General, and Surgeon A. N. Dougherty, Brevet Colonel and Medical Director, two officers who had done more for the Second Corps than words can express, were a little later assigned to the staff of General Hancock.

The new commander of the corps had already made himself a name in command of troops and on the staff which renders unnecessary any reference to his previous career in this connection. His high military scholarship, his intimate acquaintance with all arms and departments of the service, his fiery yet disciplined courage were to raise him to the highest rank among the corps commanders of the Union armies in the closing campaign.

General Humphreys brought with him to the staff of the Second Corps Major Septimus Carncross and Captain Charles J. Mills, Assistant Adjutant-Generals, and Captain Charles Mercer and Lieutenant H. H. Humphreys, aides-de-camp.

Four days after General Humphreys assumed command, the Second Corps was relieved in its positions by the Ninth, and marched to the extreme left, where it took up the line formerly held by the latter corps ; head-

quarters at Peebles' House. On the 6th of December the Third Division moved, by way of Jerusalem Road, to the Nottoway River, in support of the Fifth Corps, for the further destruction of the Weldon Railroad. On the 7th the division moved to Chambliss' Farm; on the 8th, to Jarrett's Station, on the railroad, where it took part in the destruction of the track. On the 9th the return movement began; and the Third Division reached its camp, in front of Forts Clark and Siebert, between the Vaughan and Halifax Roads, December 11th. Meanwhile the First Division had marched on the Vaughan Road, out to Hatcher's Run; had there encountered the enemy's pickets and driven them across the stream. The division then advanced to Armstrong's Mill on a reconnoissance, returning to its camp on the 10th of December. No further movements took place during the year 1864.

The commanding officers of divisions and brigades on the 31st of December were as follows :

The Artillery Brigade, Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel John G. Hazard, First Rhode Island; fifteen batteries.

First Division, Brevet Major-General Nelson A. Miles.

First Brigade, Brevet Brigadier-General George N. Macy.

Second Brigade, Colonel Robert Nugent.

Third Brigade, Colonel Clinton D. McDougall.

Fourth Brigade, Lieutenant-Colonel William Glenny.

Second Division,¹ Brigadier-General Thomas A. Smyth.

First Brigade, Colonel James M. Willett.

Second Brigade, Colonel Matthew Murphy.

Third Brigade, Lieutenant-Colonel Francis E. Pierce.

¹ Major-General Gibbon absent on leave.

Third Division, Brevet Major-General Gershom Mott.

First Brigade, Brigadier-General R. de Trobriand.

Second Brigade, Brigadier-General Byron R. Pierce.

Third Brigade, Brevet Brigadier-General, Robert McAllister.

It will be seen that the Second and Third Brigades of the First Division, consolidated on account of their enormous losses during the early weeks of the campaign of 1864, had again been separately organized, largely on account of the return of that fine soldier, Robert Nugent, who had been recommissioned, October 30th, as Colonel of his old regiment, the Sixty-ninth New York. To make these brigades up to their proper strength, the Twenty-eighth Massachusetts was taken from the First Brigade of the division; and the Seventh New York Heavy Artillery from the Fourth Brigade.

The composition of the reorganized brigades was as follows:

Second Brigade—Sixty-third, Sixty-ninth, Eighty-eighth New York; Seventh New York Heavy Artillery; Twenty-eighth Massachusetts.

Third Brigade—Seventh, Thirty-ninth, Fifty-second, One Hundred and Eleventh, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth and One hundred and Twenty-sixth New York.

Comparison of the roster of December 30th with that last given, namely, for September 30th, shows the following regiments lost to the corps:

Fifty-seventh New York, mustered out, James W. Britt, Lieutenant-Colonel; veterans and recruits to Sixty-first New York.

Fifth New Jersey, mustered out, without any field offi-

cers ; veterans and recruits consolidated into a battalion of four companies, and transferred to the Seventh New Jersey.

Sixth New Jersey, mustered out, Stephen R. Gilkyson, Lieutenant-Colonel ; veterans and recruits to the Eighth New Jersey. Major John Willian became Lieutenant-Colonel of the Eighth.

First United States Sharpshooters, mustered out. This regiment had originally been raised as follows : Companies A, B, D, and H from New York ; C, I, and K from Michigan ; F from Vermont ; G from Wisconsin ; E from New Hampshire. The veterans and recruits from the Michigan companies were transferred to the Fifth Michigan ; the remaining veterans and recruits to the Second United States Sharpshooters.

The following changes among field officers occurred during this period.

DISCHARGED.—In October : Colonel Charles E. Hapgood, Fifth New Hampshire ; Lieutenant-Colonel S. Newell Smith, Seventh Michigan ; Lieutenant-Colonel Hugh C. Flood, One Hundred and Fifty-fifth New York ; Lieutenant-Colonel Charles B. Merrill, Seventeenth Maine ; Major Levi B. Duff, One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania. In November : Colonel Peter Sides and Lieutenant-Colonel William B. Neeper, Fifty-seventh Pennsylvania ; Lieutenant-Colonel Richards McMichael, Fifty-third Pennsylvania ; Major Thomas D. Sears, Fourth New York Heavy Artillery. In December : Colonel John H. Willetts, Twelfth New Jersey ; Brevet Brigadier-General James A. Beaver, Colonel One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania ; Brevet Brigadier-General Samuel M. Bowman, Colonel Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania ; Lieutenant-Colonel Jeremiah Palmer, Second New York Heavy Artillery ; Major Robert H. Forster, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania ;

Majors George W. Sabine and Christopher W. Crossman, First Maine Heavy Artillery; Major Erastus M. Spaulding, Eighth New York Heavy Artillery.

RESIGNED.—In October: Colonel James W. Welch, Nineteenth Maine. In December: Colonel Levin Crandell, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York.

MUSTERED OUT ON EXPIRATION OF TERM OF SERVICE.—In October: Brevet Brigadier-General Paul Frank, Colonel Fifty-second New York; Brevet Brigadier-General William R. Brewster, Colonel Seventy-third New York; Brevet Brigadier-General James C. Lynch, Colonel One Hundred and Eighty-third Pennsylvania; Lieutenant-Colonel James E. McGee, Sixty-ninth New York; Brevet Colonel O. K. Broady, Lieutenant-Colonel Sixty-first New York; Lieutenant-Colonel J. Albert Monroe, First Rhode Island Artillery; Major L. W. Bradley, Sixty-fourth New York; Major James E. Larkin, Fifth New Hampshire; Major S. W. Curtis, Seventh Michigan. In November: Major S. O. Bull, Fifty-third Pennsylvania. In December: Lieutenant-Colonel J. H. Lockwood, Seventh Virginia; Lieutenant-Colonel George W. Cartwright, Twenty-eighth Massachusetts; Lieutenant-Colonel John R. Tappen, One Hundred and Twentieth New York.

It will be seen that the list of officers discharged, chiefly for disability, resigned, or mustered out during this term comprises some of the most distinguished of the corps. The names of Beaver, Frank, Sides, Brewster, Lynch, Hapgood, Broady, McMichael, Lockwood, McGee, and not a few others in this list, had been made honorable by long, faithful, and heroic service.

PROMOTED.—Colonel Thomas A. Smyth, First Delaware, to be Brigadier-General, of Volunteers, and assigned to further duty with the Second Corps.

DISMISSED THE SERVICE.—In October: Major John Garrett, Sixty-ninth New York. In November: Lieutenant-Colonel Horace P. Rugg, Fifty-ninth New York.

The following table exhibits the several constituents and the aggregate strength of the corps as by each monthly return from July to December, inclusive:

| Date. | Present for duty. | On extra or daily duty. | Present for duty and on extra or daily duty. | Sick. | In arrest or confinement. | Total present. | Absent. | Aggregate present and absent. |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--|-------|---------------------------|----------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1864. | | | | | | | | |
| July 31st | 14,857 | 4,071 | 18,928 | 1,963 | 59 | 20,950 | 25,427 | 46,377 |
| August 31st | 13,233 | 4,145 | 17,378 | 1,744 | 111 | 19,233 | 25,788 | 45,021 |
| September 30th | 17,111 | 3,817 | 20,928 | 1,703 | 94 | 22,725 | 24,119 | 46,844 |
| October 31st | 18,806 | 3,375 | 22,181 | 1,595 | 128 | 23,904 | 24,230 | 48,134 |
| November 30th | 18,371 | 3,402 | 21,773 | 1,656 | 153 | 23,582 | 24,378 | 47,960 |
| December 31st | 19,923 | 3,425 | 23,348 | 1,592 | 120 | 25,060 | 22,153 | 47,213 |

The following table exhibits these figures reduced to percentages:

| Date. | Present for duty. | On extra or daily duty. | Present for duty and on extra or daily duty. | Sick or in arrest. | Total present. | Absent. | Aggregate present and absent. |
|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--|--------------------|----------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1864. | | | | | | | |
| July 31st | 32.03 | 8.78 | 40.81 | 4.36 | 45.17 | 54.83 | 100 |
| August 31st | 29.39 | 9.21 | 38.60 | 4.12 | 42.72 | 57.28 | 100 |
| September 30th | 36.53 | 8.15 | 44.68 | 3.84 | 48.52 | 51.48 | 100 |
| October 31st | 39.07 | 7.01 | 46.08 | 3.58 | 49.66 | 50.34 | 100 |
| November 30th | 38.30 | 7.10 | 45.40 | 3.77 | 49.17 | 50.83 | 100 |
| December 31st | 42.20 | 7.25 | 49.45 | 3.63 | 53.08 | 46.92 | 100 |

OPENING OF THE YEAR 1865.

Nothing occurred of consequence to the Second Corps or the Army of the Potomac between the 1st of January and February 5th. On the latter date an expedi-

tion was set on foot to break up the Confederate route of supply, by a movement on Dinwiddie Court House. Gregg's cavalry division led in the movement. The Fifth Corps followed, to support the cavalry. General Humphreys, with the Second and Third Divisions of his corps, commanded by Generals Smyth and Mott, accompanied by the Tenth Massachusetts Battery and Battery K, Fourth United States, marched to the crossing of the Vaughan Road over Hatcher's Run, and to Armstrong's Mill. General Humphreys' instructions were, to keep up communication with General Warren, four miles distant, on the one side, while preserving communication with the left of the Union intrenchments, now held by Miles' division, three or four miles distant, on the other side. I quote General Humphreys' account of the 5th, 6th, and 7th of February :

“ At the Vaughan Road crossing, the run was found to be dammed and obstructed by fallen trees and held by a few infantry, who were merely on the lookout and were soon dispersed, and Mott's division put in position on the south side of the run. General Smyth's division was established on the north side of the run, at Armstrong's Mill. They both intrenched sufficiently. Communication was opened with General Warren. Opposite Smyth's centre the enemy's new intrenchments were in full view, about one thousand yards distant ; opposite his left they were hidden by woods. His right rested on a small wooded swamp. On the right of this swamp was the open ground of the Thompson House, in front of which was a wood extending to the enemy's intrenchments. A road led from those intrenchments, through this wood, to the open ground at Thompson's. Farther to the right was another swamp. To sit down in this way, all day, close to the enemy's intrenchments, was to

invite an attempt on one's flanks, and I anticipated that one would be made on Smyth's right, expecting the enemy to come along the wood-road into the open ground at Thompson's. I therefore brought over McAllister's brigade, of Mott's division, and put it along the edge of the wood, though it did not cover half the space that should have been occupied. Subsequently, with General Meade's authority, I sent to General Miles for a brigade, which arrived in due time. McAllister intrenched the whole line.

"A little after five o'clock the enemy's artillery opened upon Smyth; and his infantry, moving along the edge of the wood in front of Smyth's right, made a determined attack. At the same time a column of infantry emerged from the woods into the open ground of the Thompson House, by the road already mentioned, evidently expecting to find it unoccupied, and that they would take Smyth in flank and rear. But McAllister had been in his intrenchments on the right of the road, and had just drawn his brigade out and formed part of it perpendicular to them. He promptly opened a heavy and unexpected fire upon the enemy's column, which fell back at once through the woods to their intrenchments. Smyth had by this time repulsed the attack on his front, but the enemy's artillery kept up a fire on both Smyth and McAllister for some time after.

"General Lee, advised of our appearance on his right flank, and being, with good reason, sensitive to any movement upon it, had concentrated parts of Hill's and Gordon's corps to meet it. It was this force that made the attack just described. General Lee says of it: 'In the afternoon parts of Hill's and Gordon's troops demonstrated against the enemy on the left of Hatcher's Run,

near Armstrong's Mill. Finding him intrenched they were withdrawn after dark.'

"Upon ascertaining what force of the enemy was here, General Meade ordered Hartranft's division, of the Ninth Corps, and Wheaton's, of the Sixth, to join me, and when they arrived in the night they were placed on my right. General Gregg, upon reaching the Boydton Road, captured some wagons and prisoners, but found that the road was but little used, and returned in the evening to Malone's Bridge on Rowanty Creek. From this place he was ordered up to the Vaughan Road crossing, where he arrived early in the morning of the 6th with General Warren, who had also been ordered to the same point.

"A reconnoissance on the morning of the 6th showed that the enemy was not outside his intrenchments north of the run. Warren, with Gregg, was in position on the south bank. Wheaton's division and De Trobriand's brigade were held ready to support him, Mott's division having been brought to the north bank of the run."

On the afternoon of the 6th General Warren fought a severe action near Dabney's Mill, against the Confederate divisions of Evans, Pegram, and Mahone, in which his corps was driven back with heavy loss.

The result of the operations of the 5th and 6th of February was to extend the Union intrenchments to Hatcher's Run, at the Vaughan Road crossing. The Second Corps held the left of the army, the Sixth Corps taking the intrenchments at Fort Fisher and the Signal Tower. The Fifth Corps was massed in rear of the left.

The loss of the Second Corps was 138 killed and wounded; among them Colonel Murphy, Sixty-ninth New York Militia, commanding Second Brigade, Second Division, mortally wounded.

The officers, besides Colonel Murphy, killed or mor-

tally wounded in this expedition were largely out of proportion to the total number of casualties, being as follows—Lieutenant Franklin Bartlett, Fourteenth Connecticut; Lieutenant James McGinley, Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania; Lieutenant H. G. McTavish, One hundred and Sixty-fourth New York; Lieutenant F. Brandt, Eighth New Jersey; Lieutenant William H. Tibbetts, Nineteenth Massachusetts.

The corps remained in its new position, with headquarters near the Wilkinson House, through the remainder of February. During the last few days of the month Major-General Gibbon was appointed to the command of the Twenty-fourth Army Corps, a promotion to which his high military abilities entitled him. The command of his division was assumed by Brigadier-General William Hays—the same officer whom we saw commanding a brigade at Chancellorsville, where he was wounded and captured, and who led the corps from Gettysburg to the Rappahannock. The greater part of March passed without noteworthy incident, the days and weeks being devoted to inspection, drill, and discipline, to remove as far as possible the evil effects of the severe trials and losses of the preceding campaign and to prepare for the great and conclusive work of 1865.

The initiative was not, however, to be left to the Union army. On the 25th of March General Lee, seeing the beginning of the end, assumed the aggressive, in the hope that, by securing a temporary success, he might so far disconcert his adversary as to gain the time and the weather needed for his own now inevitable retirement upon Danville. To this end Lieutenant-General Gordon, who had won great distinction in the Confederate army by his operations in the Valley of Virginia, was placed in command of nearly one-half of Lee's army, and, early in

the morning of the 25th of March, fell with overpowering force upon the position of the Ninth Corps, around Fort Stedman, capturing that fort and one or two of the neighboring redoubts. For a time a great disaster appeared imminent. A resolute enemy had penetrated our line and laid hands upon our communications with City Point. But by the prompt and gallant action of Generals Parke and Hartranft and by General Tidball's admirable management of the artillery, the Confederates were finally driven out with a loss of nearly four thousand in killed, wounded, and prisoners.

As soon as information of Gordon's assault on Fort Stedman was communicated to General Humphreys, that resolute and sagacious commander, without waiting for orders, rapidly got his corps under arms and proceeded to search the Confederate lines in his front. Reconnoissances were made by each division commander; and these were pushed with so much vigor that the entire intrenched picket line of the enemy was captured. General Humphreys, advancing his line beyond this, under a heavy fire of artillery and musketry, found the main Confederate works held in force sufficient to repel an assault. Our troops were therefore withdrawn, but retained the captured picket line, which the enemy repeatedly endeavored to retake, moving out at several points in line of battle, but were in every instance driven back.

The loss of the Second Corps on this day was 513 killed and wounded, and 177 missing. General Humphreys deemed the enemy's loss in killed and wounded equal to his own, while his captures amounted to 358 officers and men. General Wright, with the Sixth Corps, attacked resolutely at the same time, capturing also the enemy's intrenched picket line with more than five hundred prisoners.

The officers killed or mortally wounded were :

Captains William H. Stewart, One Hundred and Tenth Pennsylvania ; H. T. Smith, Sixty-fourth New York, and Samuel J. Oakes, First Maine Heavy Artillery.

Anticipating by a few days the close of the month, we find on the 31st of March the organization of the corps was as follows :

The Artillery Brigade, Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel J. G. Hazard ; eight batteries.

First Division, Brevet Major-General N. A. Miles.

First Brigade, Colonel George W. Scott.

Second Brigade, Colonel Robert Nugent.

Third Brigade, Brevet Brigadier-General H. J. Maddill.

Fourth Brigade, Brevet Brigadier-General John Ramsey.

Second Division, Brigadier-General William Hays.

First Brigade, Colonel William Olmstead.

Second Brigade,¹ Colonel James P. McIvor.

Third Brigade, Brigadier-General Thomas A. Smyth.

Third Division, Brevet Major-General Gershom Mott.

First Brigade, Brigadier-General R. de Trobriand.

Second Brigade, Brigadier-General Byron R. Pierce.

Third Brigade, Brevet Brigadier-General R. McAllister.

The regiments which had disappeared from the lists of the corps since January 1st were : The Seventh New York Heavy Artillery, detached from the command ; the Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania, consolidated, January 13th,

¹ Brevet Major-General Egan absent.

with the Fifty-seventh Pennsylvania; and the Second United States Sharpshooters. The last-named regiment was broken up in January and its companies transferred to regiments from the States in which they were originally recruited—namely, Company A to the First Minnesota; Company B to the Fifth Michigan; Company C to the One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania; Company D to the Seventeenth Maine; Companies E and H to the Fourth Vermont (Sixth Corps); Companies F and G to the Fifth New Hampshire. The regiment had never more than eight companies.

The batteries detached since the 1st of January had been C and I, Fifth United States; G, First New York; F, First Pennsylvania; Third New Jersey Battery; Sixth Maine Battery; Twelfth New York Battery.

January 12th, Lieutenant-Colonel Francis A. Walker, Brevet Brigadier-General, resigned his appointment as Assistant Adjutant-General of the corps, in consequence of disabilities incurred as prisoner of war; and Lieutenant-Colonel Charles A. Whittier, once a captain in the Twentieth Massachusetts and long the senior aide-de-camp on the staff of General Sedgwick, was assigned to duty as Assistant Adjutant-General.

The aggregate strength of the corps on the 31st March, 1865, was 45,923; the "present for duty," 21,171.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE FALL OF PETERSBURG.

WE have reached the beginning of the end. Throughout the long and distressing winter of 1864-65 no dream of ultimate triumph visited the Southern people. All hope of foreign intervention on their behalf had long been abandoned. The cutting in twain of the Confederacy by the capture of Vicksburg and the opening of the Mississippi from its source to its mouth; the close environment of the insurgent region by land and sea, making it increasingly difficult to secure supplies and munitions from abroad; the altogether unanticipated resolution and devotion of the Northern States, which had shown themselves ready to pour out blood and treasure like water to maintain the integrity of the Union; the horrible carnage wrought in the ever-thinning ranks of the Confederate army by that series of actions which for frequency and for sanguinary ferocity remain unexampled in the history of war; the bankruptcy of the Confederate treasury and the utter collapse of its paper currency; the progressive impoverishment of the Southern fields and the diminishing productiveness of cultivation¹ due to

¹ "It is stated that, in a secret session of the Confederate Congress, the condition of the Confederacy as to subsistence was declared to be :

"That there was not meat enough in the Southern Confederacy for the armies it had in the field.

"That there was not, in Virginia, either meat or bread enough for the armies within her limits," etc. (Humphreys : The Virginia Campaign of 1864-65.)

the withdrawal of draught animals for military purposes, the scarcity of labor and the absence of intelligent supervision—all these causes had combined to extinguish the last thought of independence.

But the Southern leaders were still resolved to hold out, in the hope of obtaining terms of surrender which would at least save the institution of slavery; and the Southern army, heroic to the bitter end, was still ready to fight for honor, if not for victory.

Gordon's attack on Fort Stedman had, as we saw, been made in the expectation of a partial success, which should throw the Union army back for a while and postpone Grant's already threatened movement by his left, thus gaining additional time and perhaps more favorable weather for the withdrawal of the Confederate forces from Richmond and Petersburg, to seek a junction, by a rapid retreat through Danville, with Johnston's army falling back before Sherman's advance from the South. The disastrous termination of the assault of the 25th of March, taking nearly four thousand men from Lee's weakened army,¹ only made the fatal result more certain.

Without hastening or delaying his projected movement by a day, the indomitable commander of the Union armies, on the morning of the 29th of March, despatched Sheridan's powerful corps of cavalry, returned

¹ General Humphreys states the effective force of the two armies "upon the resumption of active operations in the spring of 1865" as follows :

Grant (Armies of the Potomac and of the James) : 101,000 infantry ; 9,000 artillery (369 guns) ; cavalry, 14,700. Aggregate of all arms, 124,700.

Lee : Infantry, 46,000 ; artillery, 5,000 ; cavalry, 6,000. Aggregate of all arms, 57,000.

from its splendid career in the Valley of Virginia, to Dinwiddie Court House, reinforcing it by the small cavalry division of the Army of the James, formerly under Kautz, now commanded by that brilliant young general, Ronald S. Mackenzie.

The movement of this mighty body of veteran and victorious cavalry was alone sufficient to distinguish the present from all the preceding expeditions against Lee's right and rear, and to give the fairest hopes of success. On the Boydton Plank Road, October 27th, General Gregg¹ had barely two thousand mounted men. Sheridan was now to move with full fourteen thousand ; and the striking force of this vast array was greatly increased by the vigor, skill, and resolution with which the corps, and its every division and brigade, was commanded. In no arm of the service had the movement of events tended more promptly and surely to bring the best men to the front ; and though Bayard, Davis, and Farnsworth had fallen in battle, and the fearless Buford had succumbed to disease, the cavalry, under Sheridan, with Merritt, Custer, and Crook, Mackenzie, Devin, and Davies, had commanders well worthy to oppose the brilliant captains who had led the Southern horse in so many a daring raid, in so many a desperate fight.

Powerful as was the array of cavalry despatched on this expedition, it was supported by a force of infantry far superior to that which had taken part in any of the preceding movements against the Confederate right. Two entire corps, the Second, under Humphreys, and the Fifth, under Warren, were to be set free and sent across Hatcher's Run.

¹ Major-General D. M. Gregg had, since February, retired from command of the Second Cavalry Division and was not engaged in the operations to be described.

THE 29TH OF MARCH.

In pursuance of the plans of the Lieutenant-General the Second Corps was, on the night of the 28th, relieved in its intrenchments by two divisions of Gibbon's Twenty-fourth Corps, which had been brought around, by the rear of the army, from the extreme right, and so secretly as to escape the observation of the Confederates. In the early morning of the 29th General Humphreys moved with his command over Hatcher's Run, crossing it by the Vaughan Road; and, resting his right on the run, brought his divisions successively up on the left, until the corps was in line, facing north, and then moved forward to envelop the enemy's intrenchments. Meanwhile Warren, with the Fifth Corps, passing the Rowanty some two miles below Humphreys' crossing of Hatcher's, moved still farther west, then also turned northward, with the purpose to connect with Humphreys' left on the one hand, while extending his own left toward, if not to, the cavalry operating around Dinwiddie. About noon, however, Warren was directed to move up the Quaker Road with his whole corps, which he did, encountering a Confederate force, under Anderson, which had hurriedly been sent out to meet him. This Warren drove away after a sharp fight. On the right Humphreys had advanced without meeting serious opposition, and on the extreme left the cavalry had gained its assigned positions in front of Dinwiddie.

The night of the 29th of March thus found the new movement unchecked, having progressed as far as could reasonably have been expected, considering the nature of the country. The cavalry corps and two corps of infantry had reached a position from which they seriously

threatened the South Side Railroad. Up to this time General Grant had an alternative plan. He hoped by the movements of Sheridan, Warren, and Humphreys to induce, or even compel, Lee to come out and attack. Failing this, however, he had instructed Sheridan that he might cut loose from the Army of the Potomac and push for the Danville Railroad, breaking the South Side Railroad on the way, if practicable, between Petersburg and Burksville, but, in any event, destroying it beyond the latter point. It was in contemplation that these movements of Sheridan might result in his joining Sherman in the south. By the night of the 29th, however, Grant had made up his mind that the time had fully come for striking the final fatal blow, and he directed Sheridan,¹ abandoning all thoughts of a Southern raid, to operate directly against Lee's rear and at once to gain possession of Five Forks, an important junction of roads, north-northwest from Dinwiddie. The most considerable of the roads centring at Five Forks is the White Oak Road, which runs almost due west from the Boydton Road, at Burgess' Mill, the scene of Hancock's fight of October 27th.

The alternative presented to General Lee by our movement against Five Forks was a painful, a cruelly painful one. To permit Sheridan, with his powerful corps of cavalry, supported by Warren's infantry, to establish himself at Five Forks was to allow his communications with the South to be cut off almost at the will of the Union commander. On the other hand, seriously to

¹ I now feel like ending the matter, if it is possible to do so, before going back. I do not want you, therefore, to cut loose and go after the enemy's roads at present. We will all act together as one army, here, till it is seen what can be done with the enemy.
—GRANT TO SHERIDAN.

contest the possession of Five Forks involved the despatch of a column of infantry far beyond his already fearfully extended lines, to fight superior numbers in an isolated position whence it might not be able to retreat in case of defeat. To make up a column for this purpose which could have any chance of opposing Sheridan's movement with success would require his forty miles of intrenchments to be stripped to absolutely the last degree consistent with undertaking to hold them at all. Were that column to be destroyed, the Confederate commander would not have it in his power again to form a column to meet any further extension of Grant's lines, or to oppose any new movement into his rear, without leaving his own works so thinly manned that they might fairly be carried at almost any point by a rush of the Union skirmishers.

Desperate as was the chance of defending Five Forks by an isolated column of infantry far out beyond his right, General Lee determined to take that chance and fight upon it. On the 28th he had withdrawn Fitzhugh Lee's division of cavalry from his extreme left, beyond the James, to meet the threat offered by Sheridan's concentration; and on the 29th he sent down General Anderson, with Bushrod Johnson's division and Wise's brigade, to meet Warren moving up the Quaker Road. Pickett's division was also marched across the Confederate rear from Bermuda Hundred, while General A. P. Hill's troops were extended along the White Oak Road, covering the position at Burgess' Mill and other points still farther to the west, south of Hatcher's Run. Thus Lee answered Grant's movements of the 29th.

THE 30TH OF MARCH.

The succeeding day was without important incident, the operations of the Union troops being delayed by a fearful downpour which had begun the night before and continued all through the day, flooding much of that low, swampy, and tangled country, and rendering the miry roads altogether impassable for either artillery or trains until they should be corduroyed. In spite of this the troops were not altogether stationary. Humphreys, advancing with his whole line,¹ drove the enemy inside his intrenchments along Hatcher's Run, from the Crow House to the Boydton Road, and held the ground closely in front, though without assaulting. Warren moved up the Quaker and Boydton Roads as far as the Dabney Mill Road, and occupied a line covering the Boydton Road as far as Gravelly Run, and also pushed a reconnaissance of Ayres' division a considerable distance to the northwest. Sheridan, on his part, sending a portion of his corps toward Five Forks, encountered the enemy's cavalry in force covering that position, and was brought to a halt for the night.

The Confederates, on their part, made use of the delay caused by the storm of the 30th in bringing forward their forces to the impending battle for the possession of Five Forks. The cavalry divisions of Rosser and of the

¹ General William Hays' division formed the right, near Hatcher's Run, at the Crow House. In the morning it was supported by Turner's division of the Twenty-fourth Corps, which in the afternoon crossed to the north side of the run, connecting with Hays on his right. The left of the Second Corps connected with the Fifth Corps, near the Boydton Plank Road, in the vicinity of Mrs. Rainie's house.

two Lees were between that point and Dinwiddie Court House; while at the Forks General Pickett took command of three of his own infantry brigades and two of Johnson's. Although the object of the Confederate chief was defence, yet, true to the traditions of his daring army, he sought that object, not by forming lines in front of Five Forks and awaiting the assault of the gathering Union forces, but by audaciously assuming the aggressive, in the hope of crippling, if not destroying, Sheridan's column, and thereby disconcerting and delaying the further movements of Grant's army.

THE 31ST OF MARCH.

The contest which ensued as Pickett, with six brigades of cavalry and five of infantry, attacked the cavalry corps of Sheridan in the positions it had reached the evening before, moving up from Dinwiddie Court House toward Five Forks, was of the most desperate character. Much of the country was altogether unsuited to cavalry operations, and the mingled infantry and cavalry of Pickett's command possessed, for fighting purposes, a decided superiority in that situation. The Union cavalry, stoutly resisting, was driven backward toward Dinwiddie, and a portion of Sheridan's command was driven off eccentrically to the rear and compelled to join the corps by a considerable *détour*. The fighting lasted until night fell.

Meanwhile General Warren, with the Fifth Corps, had been moving forward from his position of the night before with the purpose of seizing the White Oak Road, and thus interposing between the forces of Pickett and Fitzhugh Lee, at Five Forks, and the main army of Lee,

from which those forces had been detached on their perilous mission. In order that Warren might strike with his whole corps, Griffin's division had before daylight been relieved in its position of the 30th of March by Miles' division of the Second Corps; and Warren was thus enabled to move forward with all three of his divisions, Ayres leading.

The enterprise which General Warren had undertaken, namely, that of cutting the White Oak Road, presented to the Confederate commander-in-chief an issue of such tremendous consequence as to call for the exercise of vigilance, resolution, and audacity even beyond what might have been expected of that high-daring, much enduring army. General Lee himself came down in person and directed the formation and advance of the brigades of Hunton, McGowan, and Gracie, which, supported by Wise's brigade, threw themselves with desperate courage at once upon the front and flank of Ayres column, drove back that veteran and well-commanded division, and, pushing forward, threw into confusion the supporting division of Crawford.

The sudden outburst of musketry from Warren's front, followed quickly by the appearance of large bodies of broken men going to the rear, showed General Humphreys that the Fifth Corps urgently needed support, and he at once directed General Miles to send forward two of his brigades to attack the left flank of the enemy opposing Warren. Miles instantly led the brigades of Maddill and Ramsey, supported by that of Nugent, to the relief of the Fifth Corps. The two leading brigades were flung freely and boldly forward without waiting to feel their way, and, striking at once the front and flank of Wise's brigade, broke it and drove it from the ground, capturing one flag and three hundred prisoners.

In this impetuous charge Miles' troops reached the flank of Hunton's brigade, also, taking some prisoners from that command and compelling it to fall back rapidly to escape being taken in rear. At the same time General Warren, having brought forward some of Griffin's troops, restored the fortune of the day on his own front; and the audacious force of Confederates fell back again into their intrenchments. Subsequently De Trobriand's brigade, of Mott's division, was put in position to strengthen Miles, and McAllister's brigade was extended to the left to connect the two divisions.

General Humphreys had not limited his efforts for the support of Warren to the advance of Miles' division; but, immediately on learning that the enemy had assumed the offensive, he directed General Mott, if possible, to carry the intrenchments at Burgess' Mill and General Hays to carry the Crow House redoubt. Neither of these assaults was successful, owing to the great strength of the fortifications and to the impenetrable abattis found along much of the line; but the attacks of Mott and Hays were so close and persistent as to prevent the Confederates from reinforcing the troops in front of Warren and Miles, General Wilcox, who commanded the line at Burgess' Mill and the Crow House, being compelled to refuse General Heth's request for an additional brigade.

By half-past two o'clock General Warren had reformed his corps, and, advancing again to the attack, succeeded in carrying the enemy's advanced works, Generals Chamberlain and Gregory greatly distinguishing themselves by their personal gallantry and by the spirit with which they led their respective brigades.

Thus ended the 31st of March. Although the Confederates, by their daring initiative against Warren, had secured a temporary success, they had been ultimately

driven back, with heavy losses in killed, wounded, and prisoners, which they could ill afford to suffer; while, in the desperate efforts made, on their extreme right, to crush the column under Sheridan, the cavalry and infantry under Pickett had been borne forward into a position which was one of considerable danger, in view of Warren's attitude along the White Oak Road.

The loss of the Fifth Corps during the day had been 1,406 killed, wounded, and missing. The losses of the cavalry cannot be separated from those of the preceding and following days.

The loss of the Second Corps during the day of March 31st was as follows:

| | Killed. | | | Wounded. | | | Missing. | | | Totals. | | | Aggre- gate. |
|----------------------|---------|------|-------|----------|------|-------|----------|------|-------|---------|------|-------|-----------------|
| | C. | O. | E. M. | C. | O. | E. M. | C. | O. | E. M. | C. | O. | E. M. | |
| Corps Staff..... | 1 | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | 1 | .... | .... | 1 |
| Artillery Brigade .. | .... | .... | .... | .... | 4 | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | 4 | .... | 4 |
| First Division | 5 | 40 | 12 | 233 | .... | 41 | 17 | 314 | .... | 17 | 314 | .... | 331 |
| Second Division.... | .... | .... | 2 | 13 | .... | 1 | 2 | 14 | .... | 2 | 14 | .... | 16 |
| Third Division .... | .... | 6 | 1 | 58 | 2 | 42 | 3 | 106 | .... | 3 | 106 | .... | 109 |
| | 6 | 46 | 15 | 308 | 2 | 84 | 23 | 438 | .... | 23 | 438 | .... | 461 |

Among the officers killed on the 31st of March was Major Charles J. Mills, Assistant Adjutant-General, serving on the staff of General Humphreys. Major Mills was a most gallant and capable young officer.

FIVE FORKS—APRIL 1ST.

We have said that the advanced position gained by Pickett, in driving Sheridan's cavalry back upon Dinwiddie, on the 31st of March, was one full of peril. General

Lee had ventured much in placing an infantry column at Five Forks at all ; but the risk was greatly enhanced as that force moved southward toward Dinwiddie, in support of the Confederate cavalry. Of this the Union commanders were preparing to make the most. Meade had not waited for Grant, nor Warren for Meade, before taking the first steps to strike this force in flank. At five o'clock on the preceding afternoon, General Warren, having re-established his corps in front of the White Oak Road, and hearing, on his left, the sound of heavy firing receding toward Dinwiddie Court House, had sent Bartlett's brigade, by a wood-road, with instructions to reach and strike the column assailing Sheridan. The short winter day, however, was already so nearly spent that General Bartlett was not able to get into action.

During the night, orders were given to Warren which contemplated his moving one division (Ayres') around by the rear, to support Sheridan at Dinwiddie ; while the other two divisions were to move straight westward, as Bartlett's brigade had done the preceding afternoon, that they might be in position to strike Pickett's left flank at daybreak of April 1st. Inasmuch as Warren's movement would require him to break connection with Humphreys, the latter officer was directed to throw his own left well back, to guard against possible attempts upon his rear.

It does not belong to the scope of this history to explain the failure of General Warren to meet the expectations of the commander of the army as to an attack on Pickett's left flank and rear in the early morning. Suffice it to say that when Sheridan and Ayres moved forward from Dinwiddie, to renew the battle in which the cavalry had been, the preceding day, worsted, and Warren, from the east, having repaired his bridges, brought his two

divisions to where Pickett's left flank had been the night before, the entire Confederate force was found to have fallen back upon Five Forks. Hither they were pursued by the cavalry and the Fifth Corps; and here, on the afternoon of the 1st of April, they fought and lost the momentous battle which decided the fate of Petersburg and Richmond. More than four thousand prisoners fell into the hands of the impetuous Sheridan, while the Confederate killed and wounded made up an aggregate loss which it was simply impossible for General Lee to sustain and thereafter to hold his perilously extended lines, forty miles in length, covering both Richmond and Petersburg. The remainder of Pickett's broken force retreated in disorder upon the South Side Railroad; and here they were joined, during the night, by four brigades from Lee's right, in a last effort, which was clearly hopeless, to save the Confederate communications.

It was in the very moment of victory at Five Forks that a blow was struck which crushed one of the most illustrious officers of the civil war, once an honored commander of the Second Army Corps. General Sheridan, who was in immediate command at Five Forks, becoming impatient at what he conceived to be unnecessary delays in the movements of the Fifth Corps, relieved General Warren from his command, even at the very time when his divisions were gathering in prisoners by thousands. Officers and men of the Second Corps, who witnessed General Warren's energy, promptitude, and courage on many a trying occasion, will never believe that he deserved this hard fate, which wrecked his whole life, and which, after a long but fruitless struggle to secure reparation, brought him to his grave a broken-hearted man. I have no wish to question the sincerity of General Sheridan's motives in this most unfortunate act.

The history of war shows too many instances of gallant and generous soldiers thoroughly misunderstanding each other, and entertaining mutual distrust and dislike without a cause. The splendid martial enthusiasm of Sheridan and his impetuosity in battle, which made him such a terror to his foes, might not unnaturally at times lead him to be over-eager with those who were charged with executing his orders. What is infinitely to be regretted is, that the brilliant and fortunate successor of Grant and Sherman did not, when the heat of action had passed, when the passions of the moment had cooled, himself seize the opportunity which his own power and fame afforded him, to take the initiative in vindicating the reputation of one of the bravest, brightest, and most spirited of the youthful commanders of the Union armies. It would not have diminished the renown which Sheridan won at Yellow Tavern, Cedar Creek, and Five Forks, had he welcomed an early occasion to repair the terrible injury which one hasty word, in the heat of battle, had done to the position, the fame, and the hopes of the man who snatched Little Round Top from the hands of the exulting Confederates. It may be that the triple stars which the dashing commander of the Union cavalry so nobly won would have shone with a brighter lustre in the eyes of posterity had somewhat more of the magnanimity of his great silent chief mingled with the splendid qualities of Philip Sheridan.

THE FINAL ASSAULTS ON PETERSBURG.

Hardly had Sheridan won his brilliant victory at Five Forks, when, disdaining to follow the broken column of Pickett northward, he wheeled to his right and moved

back to inclose Petersburg from the west. Night, however, came upon him before he could reach the rear of Lee's intrenchments.

Let us now return to the Second Corps. We saw that in the morning of the 1st General Humphreys was directed to "refuse" his left, in consequence of the Fifth Corps having moved over to operate with Sheridan at Five Forks. At half-past five in the afternoon of that day, however, General Grant instructed him to again throw forward his left, and, by seizing the White Oak Road, prevent the enemy from sending troops by that route against Sheridan, who was then about to attack Pickett. This order was promptly executed, and the road was held in force by Miles' division.

At nine o'clock, Grant, having learned of Sheridan's victory, and being apprehensive that Lee, abandoning his works, might fall with his whole force on the Fifth Corps and the cavalry, in their isolated position, directed General Humphreys to feel the Confederate lines for a vulnerable point. If such a point should be found, Humphreys was to assault immediately, and, pushing through, was to follow up the enemy in spite of the darkness. If, however, he could not by midnight accomplish this object, then Miles' division was to be sent down the White Oak Road to reinforce Sheridan.

In pursuance of this order the artillery of the corps at once opened with fury, and both Miles and Mott attacked, driving in the enemy's skirmishers and pushing into the slashing which covered the front of the Confederate works. It was found, however, that the position could not be carried, and Miles was accordingly sent off to reinforce Sheridan. Mott's left, being now exposed, was drawn back; but both he and General Hays kept up frequent attacks throughout the night, feeling the enemy closely

at all points, and holding their troops in hand to throw them against the Confederate works in case any sign should appear of a withdrawal of the garrisons.

During the night of the 1st to the 2d of April the capture of Petersburg was preparing with an irresistible force. At four o'clock on the morning of the 2d the Sixth and Ninth Corps attacked, over ground long familiar to our troops; with the utmost gallantry and determination broke through the enemy's lines; and, sweeping down to right and to left, captured a large part of the Confederate works, with many guns and great numbers of prisoners. Here fell the distinguished Confederate General A. P. Hill, who had borne so conspicuous a part in all the battles of Northern Virginia. At about seven o'clock Gibbon's Twenty-fourth Corps joined in the series of victorious assaults, extending from near the Appomattox to Hatcher's Run.

It was now the turn of the Second Corps, which had taken part in so many bloody and fruitless assaults on intrenched works, to join in the general movement of victory. During the night General Humphreys had been instructed not to assault, as one of his divisions was absent; but he had from four o'clock in the morning kept up a series of dashes against the enemy's works, to occupy their attention. At six o'clock, however, receiving information of the successes of the Sixth and Ninth Corps, Humphreys directed Mott to make every effort to carry the works in his front, and Hays to assault the Crow House redoubt. The last was successfully performed at eight o'clock, three pieces of artillery and a large part of the garrisons of two considerable works being captured. McAllister's brigade had already seized the intrenched picket line in front of Mott's division; and on signs of the withdrawal of the enemy the whole

division was thrown forward, and soon all the Confederate works south of Hatcher's Run were in possession of the Second Corps.

The entire outer line of Confederate works had now fallen into the hands of the Union army, except where, at one or two points, portions were still held by resolute Confederates, their flanks protected by traverses. Lee was still, however, strong enough to maintain the inner line, drawn immediately around Petersburg, against the assaults of the Ninth Corps. Into this were gathered all the troops which had escaped from the assaults of the early morning. The Sixth and Twenty-fourth Corps, having carried the entire body of works in their front, had wheeled to the right and were moving back upon Petersburg to envelop the city from the west. Finding this task in such good hands, Sheridan, who had, as we saw, the evening before, moved northeastward, after his victory at Five Forks, turned about with the Fifth Corps, now under Griffin, and proceeded in pursuit of the remnants of Pickett's column, of the four brigades which, as we saw, joined Pickett during the night, and of those troops, holding the right of the Confederate intrenchments, which had escaped capture in the assaults of the early morning. In doing so General Sheridan returned Miles' division to the Second Corps.

Reinforced by Miles' return, General Humphreys at once put his troops in motion to pursue the enemy to Sutherland Station, expecting by this to close in upon the rear of all the enemy's force which Wright and Gibbon had cut off from Petersburg, while Sheridan should strike them in front and flank. General Meade, however, on being advised of Humphreys' purpose, countermanded the movement. The divisions of Mott and Hays were directed to move on the Boydton Road to-

ward Petersburg, and there join the Sixth Corps, while Miles should move toward Petersburg by the first right-hand fork road after crossing Hatcher's Run.

The two divisions that were first sent to Petersburg did not become engaged. Miles, however, moving with great vigor out the Claiborne Road, had already come in contact with a force of the enemy, consisting of four brigades under General Cook,¹ occupying a strong position on a smooth open ridge, at the foot of which, some six or eight hundred yards in front of the crest, ran a small stream. Cook's troops had hastily thrown up intrenchments to defend this crest.

Notwithstanding the numbers opposed to him and the strength of their position, Miles threw forward the brigades of Nugent and Madill. Although the attack was made with impetuosity, it was repulsed, General Madill being severely wounded. Undeterred by this check, Miles reformed his lines, and at half-past twelve again attacked the Confederate line, this time on the left, with Madill's brigade, now commanded by General Clinton McDougall. Notwithstanding a powerful concentration of artillery fire in support of McDougall's assault, the brigade was again repulsed with severe loss, the gallant commander being among the wounded.

News of Miles' hard fighting having reached General Meade, General Humphreys, who had taken the other two divisions toward Petersburg, was directed to counter-march with Hays' division, by the Cox Road, toward Sutherland Station, to get into the rear of the force opposing Miles; but before General Humphreys could

¹ This force had earlier in the day been commanded by General Heth, who had at this time been called to Petersburg in consequence of A. P. Hill's death.

arrive upon the ground that indomitable fighter had carried the position. Forming his troops for a third assault, and disposing his artillery, among which Clark's New Jersey battery was conspicuous, for the most effective support of the charging column, Miles, at about three o'clock, swept over the Confederate works, capturing two guns, a color, and six hundred prisoners. The remaining Confederates only escaped by the most precipitate retreat.

The losses of the Second Corps during the 1st and 2d of April had been distributed as follows :

| | Killed. | | | | Wounded. | | | | Missing. | | | | Totals. | | | | Aggregate. |
|-----------------------|---------|------|------|------|----------|------|------|------|----------|------|------|------|---------|------|------|------|------------|
| | C. | O. | E. | M. | C. | O. | E. | M. | C. | O. | E. | M. | C. | O. | E. | M. | |
| Artillery Brigade... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | 1 | .... | .... | .... | 1 | .... | 1 |
| First Division | 4 | 30 | 16 | 223 | 3 | 94 | 23 | 347 | 370 | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... |
| Second Division ..... | .... | 1 | 2 | 9 | .... | 2 | 2 | 12 | 14 | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... |
| Third Division..... | 2 | 8 | 1 | 54 | .... | 6 | 3 | 68 | 71 | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... | .... |
| | 6 | 39 | 19 | 286 | 3 | 103 | 28 | 428 | 456 | | | | | | | | |

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE PURSUIT—APPOMATTOX, APRIL 3 TO 9, 1865.

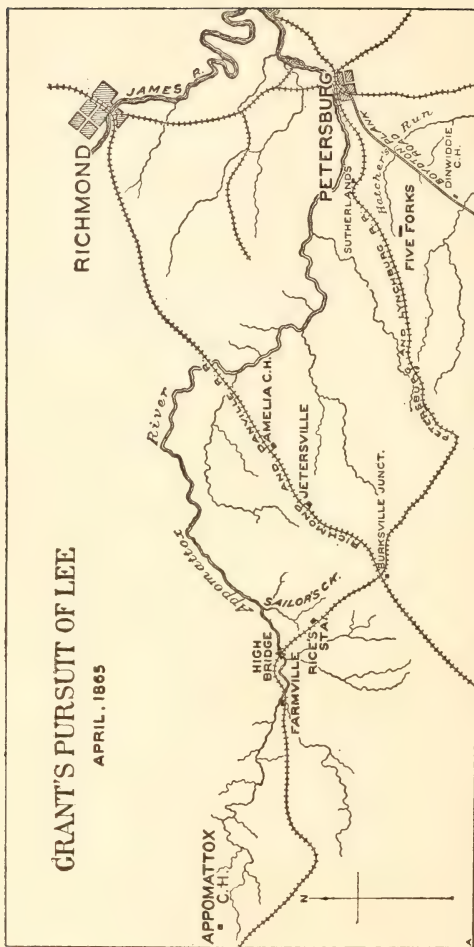
PICKETT'S defeat at Five Forks had rendered it impossible that General Lee should longer hold Richmond and Petersburg. Had he retreated during the night of the 1st, in such order as he might, he would have carried out of his unbroken lines an army still dangerous to attack when in position, and not to be hurriedly pursued without great risk. But the crushing in of his lines, from the Appomattox to far beyond Burgess' Mill, and the grievous losses sustained during the close and fierce fighting of the 2d of April, had greatly facilitated the work which the Union armies had yet to do, when, on the morning of the 3d, it was found that Richmond and Petersburg had been abandoned, and that all that could be gathered together of the once mighty army of Northern Virginia was in full retreat, with the single object, by a rapid march around Grant's left flank, to gain North Carolina and there unite with Johnston, retreating before the victorious troops of Sherman.

The story of that great pursuit, in which the endurance of both armies was taxed to the utmost, forms one of the most striking chapters in the history of modern warfare. It is my simpler task only to recite the part taken therein by the Second Army Corps.

General Lee's immediate objective was Burksville Junction, about midway between Petersburg and Lynch-

GRANT'S PURSUIT OF LEE

APRIL, 1865



burg. If, by rapid movements, he could reach this point in advance of the Union troops, his road to Danville would be open and his immediate escape would be effected. To cut him off from this point the utmost energies of the Armies of the Potomac and the James were bent, throughout the days immediately following, stung into the keenest activity by the urgent demands of their tireless and unrelenting commander-in-chief, worthily seconded by Sheridan and Ord, Humphreys and Wright.

APRIL 3D TO 5TH.

On the 3d the Second Corps, following the Fifth, moved out the river road toward the west, crossed Namozine Creek, and encamped for the night at Nintercomac Creek. On the 4th the corps, still holding close to the Fifth Corps, moved over roads rendered almost impassable by rain, reaching Deep Creek at 7 P.M., the infantry having been delayed many hours by the cavalry, which had the right of way. Marching again at 1 A.M. of the 5th, the head of column reached Jetersville at three o'clock in the afternoon, the road having again been taken from the infantry by the cavalry for many hours. At Jetersville the Second Corps went into position on both right and left of the Fifth Corps.

SAILOR'S CREEK—APRIL 6TH.

Thus far the armies had pursued their race westward, in nearly parallel lines, without collision, except as our cavalry, wrought to the intensest activity by their fiery commander, improved every occasion to charge the trains

and the moving columns of the retreating army. On the afternoon of the 5th of April, however, Lee's army was concentrated about Amelia Court House, while the Second and Fifth Union Corps, at Jetersville, stood across the Danville Railroad, midway between Amelia Court House and Burksville Junction. Thus the first stage of these hurried movements had resulted in shutting Lee off from his most direct route to Burksville. Not only so, but the Union commanders were, on the night of the 5th, confident that they would be able to bring the Confederates to a stand and to an action about Amelia Court House on the following day. In accordance with this purpose, at six o'clock on the morning of the 6th, the Second, Fifth, and Sixth Corps, in the order named, from left to right, moved northeast, up the line of the Danville Road, toward Amelia Court House, where it was hoped to enclose Lee's army. The Confederate commander, however, ascertaining that he could not break through Jetersville to Burksville, had all night been continuing his flight westward; and so, while the three Union corps were actually moving backward, in line of battle, toward Richmond, the long Confederate columns, passing around Meade's left flank, were already directed on Rice's Station, northwest of Burksville, where Longstreet, in advance, had arrived at daylight of the 6th.

The discovery of the Confederate columns moving around the left flank of the Union army caused a change of direction. The advance on Amelia Court House was abandoned; and the three corps—the Fifth, the Second, and the Sixth—dashed into a race to see which should be foremost in striking the Confederates in flank or rear, while Sheridan, with the cavalry, moving by the left, undertook to head off their columns should they seek to turn southward, harassing them, meanwhile, with the fire

of his artillery and with threats of attack as they moved wearily on their westward way.

The day thus opened was one of the most memorable in the history of warfare. For many hours portions of the Union troops were marching in lines parallel to those taken by the Confederates, never at a great distance, often in plain sight, each column so intent upon reaching its goal as to be unwilling to lose the briefest time in collisions which could not affect the grand result. While thus portions of the Union army were stretched out in this great race, neck and neck with the hostile column, other corps, fastening upon the rear of the Confederates, maintained a running fight from morning until nearly night. To bring Lee's army to a stand was now the supreme object of every officer, high or low, and of every soldier of the ranks. So intense was the pursuit that men forgot fatigue; and wherever an opportunity to strike a blow was offered, either by change of direction or by some check to the movement of the Confederate columns, attacks were made upon the instant, without preparation, and without regard to opposing numbers. Doubtless a broken and demoralized army has more than once been thus pursued by victorious forces hanging upon its flanks and rear. That which makes the 6th of April altogether unique in war is that the Confederate army was not demoralized. Its valiant regiments and brigades were still full of the spirit which had animated them on a score of battle-fields; its seemingly wild and unregarding rush westward was no *sauve qui peut* of terror-stricken men, but was ordered throughout by the same sagacious, resolute commanders who had so often led that army to victory, and who, amid the appalling exertions and privations of this bitter retreat, still kept their hold unbroken on their faithful soldiery.

In the advance upon Amelia Court House, in the early morning, the Second Corps, as we saw, held the left of the line. It was, therefore, the first to discover the Confederate columns escaping around our left flank. General Humphreys immediately directed Miles to bring up artillery and open upon the enemy, and ordered General Mott, who was up to the Sulphur Springs Road, to send a brigade across and attack the moving troops, with a view to developing their numbers and purpose. Word was at once sent to the headquarters of the army of what had been observed and done. It was nearly ten o'clock before the orders were received from General Webb, who had succeeded Humphreys as Chief of Staff to General Meade, directing the abandonment of the movement on Amelia Court House and the immediate pursuit of the retreating enemy. Mott's division was at once put in motion past the Sulphur Springs toward Detonsville, his right resting on the road. Miles was directed to cross Flat Creek above Mott, and move in pursuit in the same direction, his left resting on the road. Barlow, who had just returned from his long absence, and taken command of the Second Division, relieving General William Hays, was to move in rear of the right of Miles. Of the two leading divisions each was to have two-thirds of its force in line of battle.

Humphreys' fierce pursuit soon encountered a check upon the banks of Flat Creek, a tributary of the Appomattox, eighty to one hundred feet wide, and so deep that in its shallowest spaces the water came up to the armpits of the infantry. The bridge over this creek had been destroyed by the Confederates after their own passage. Ordinarily such an obstacle would have caused a long delay; but the spirit of the men was now so buoyant that they were almost ready to fly. A portion

of the command waded across, holding their guns and cartridge-boxes over their heads; and, in "an incredibly short space of time," as General Humphreys relates, a bridge was thrown over the stream, by which the artillery and remaining infantry could cross.

The brief delay had only stimulated the ardor of the troops, and commanders and men flung themselves into the race with a spirit that defied fatigue. The enemy immediately in front was the corps of Gordon. For fourteen miles this gallant body of men, gallantly commanded, maintained a running fight with their fiery pursuers. Again and again the Confederates attempted a stand, and every time were swept off their feet by the furious rush of the Union divisions. "The country," says General Humphreys, "was broken, and consisted of open fields alternating with forests, with dense undergrowth and swamps, over and through which the lines of battle followed closely on the skirmish line, with a rapidity and nearness of connection that I believe to be unexampled, and which I confess astonished me."

The last attempted stand of the enemy was on Sailor's Creek, where a short but sharp contest yielded the corps thirteen colors, three pieces of artillery, and several hundred prisoners, with more than two hundred wagons and seventy ambulances. The entire captures of the day on the part of the corps had embraced 1,700 prisoners, four guns, and more than three hundred wagons and ambulances, with their contents. For miles the line of the Confederate retreat had been strewn with tents, baggage, limbers, and battery forges. Throughout this long, running fight the artillery of the Second Corps kept its place in advance of the infantry, often abreast of the skirmish line. Here, too, were found all the gen-

eral and commanding officers, directing the pursuit and leading every charge in person.

The losses of the corps had been 396, distributed as follows :

| | Killed. | | Wounded. | | Missing. | | Totals. | | Total. |
|------------------------|---------|-------|----------|-------|----------|-------|---------|-------|--------|
| | C. O. | E. M. | C. O. | E. M. | C. O. | E. M. | C. O. | E. M. | |
| Artillery Brigade..... | .... | .... | .... | 2 | .... | .... | .... | 2 | 2 |
| First Division..... | 1 | 19 | 6 | 73 | 6 | 64 | 13 | 156 | 169 |
| Third Division..... | 1 | 34 | 16 | 159 | .... | 15 | 17 | 208 | 225 |
| | 2 | 53 | 22 | 234 | 6 | 79 | 30 | 366 | 396 |

Among the severely wounded was the brave and capable General Mott, who conducted his division with the utmost gallantry, energy, and address until compelled to relinquish the command to General De Trobriand.

Such was the 6th of April to the Second Corps. The other corps had joined with not less ardor in the great pursuit from first to last ; and while the Second Corps, near to dark, was making its fight against Gordon, the splendid Sixth, with the cavalry divisions of Crook and Merritt, broke and routed the commands of Ewell and Anderson, taking many thousands of prisoners—among them six general officers, including Lieutenant-General Ewell.

FARMVILLE—APRIL 7TH.

After the terrible disasters which the Confederate army had sustained on the 6th, Longstreet, with the troops of Field, Heth, and Wilcox, marched to Farmville, crossed there to the north bank of the Appomattox, and on the morning of the 7th began to move

out on the road which runs through Appomattox Court House to Lynchburg. All hope of reaching Danville had now to be abandoned. The only possible escape of Lee's fearfully depleted army was through Appomattox Court House to Lynchburg, and thence into the mountains. While thus Longstreet, with one-half of the remaining Confederate forces, crossed to the north bank of the Appomattox at Farmville, Gordon, with the other half, crossed at High Bridge. The withdrawal of both wings to the north bank of the Appomattox gave a temporary advantage, in time, to them, as against our troops which, up to this point, had been bending everything to prevent Lee's escape southward. The Confederates now had the river between themselves and their pursuers, and, by making the utmost use of this, might gain distance in their further flight. Generals Ord and Wright, with their commands, soon reached Farmville; but were unable to cross, the bridges having been destroyed. Humphreys, having resumed the pursuit at half-past five on the morning of the 7th, and moving by the roads nearest the river, came up to High Bridge just at the moment when Gordon's corps and Mahone's division, having crossed by the railroad and the wagon-road bridges, had blown up the redoubt that formed the bridge-head, and were setting fire to both bridges. Barlow, whose division had the advance, with the utmost promptness threw forward the head of his column and drove away those of the enemy who were engaged in the destruction of the wagon-road bridge. Surprised at this interruption of their work, the Confederate commanders sent back reinforcements; but Barlow had now arrived upon the ground with troops enough to seize and hold the bridge against all interference. While thus the wagon road was saved by the opportune arrival and

prompt action of Barlow, under the immediate direction of General Humphreys, who was literally at the head of the column, Colonel Thomas L. Livermore, of the corps staff, led a party for the preservation of the railroad bridge, which was already on fire. This, the proper High Bridge, was an open-deck bridge, built on piers about sixty feet high, across the river and the marshy ground on the north side. Colonel Livermore and his party, with the utmost gallantry, put out the fires while fighting almost hand to hand with the enemy's skirmishers, and saved the bridge, with the exception of four spans over the marsh.

The enemy's purpose of destroying the bridges having been thus foiled, Barlow's division commenced to move over the wagon-road bridge. Mahone's division, drawn up on the opposite bank, resting upon two redoubts, at first seemed prepared to dispute the crossing ; but soon moved away toward Farmville, and the Second Corps passed over without opposition. Taking with him the divisions under Miles and De Trobriand, General Humphreys moved along the road running northwest, to follow what he believed to be the line of retreat of the main body of the enemy, but sent Barlow, with his division, along the railroad track toward Farmville. Arriving near Farmville, General Barlow found the place in possession of a strong force of the enemy. The troops of Ord and Wright, on the south bank, had been unable to cross on account of the destruction of the bridges. Barlow, although unsupported, attacked with great impetuosity, and succeeded in cutting off a large wagon train, which he destroyed. Here fell General Thomas A. Smyth, of Delaware, an officer whose name has been frequently mentioned in these pages, distinguished in nearly every battle of the Second Corps for his courage, energy, and

devotion to duty. His death on this occasion is doubly memorable, as that of the last general officer who fell in the Union armies during the war. This disaster led to the loss of a portion of Barlow's skirmish line and to a temporary check of the division.

Meanwhile General Humphreys, with the other two divisions, was pressing forward to the Lynchburg stage road, where, about one o'clock, he came in contact with the enemy in a strong intrenched position covering both the stage and plank roads to Lynchburg. It was, in fact, the entire remaining infantry of Lee's army at bay. General Humphreys had rightly apprehended the real meaning of the Confederate movements, and his vigorous advance had found the vital point. Unfortunately the Second Corps was now entirely isolated, Wright's and Ord's commands not being able to cross to its support. With the two divisions in hand, however, Humphreys searched the whole length of the enemy's line, while sending word to Barlow to rejoin him and despatching messages to General Meade urging a prompt advance of the other corps.

While General Humphreys, in his isolated position, was awaiting the advance of Wright's and Ord's troops, which, for the reason that we have stated, was not destined to take place, he observed movements upon the enemy's right which appeared to indicate that our troops were crossing at Farmville, and firing was soon heard in that direction. The commotion observed in the enemy's ranks and the firing which ensued were, in fact, caused by the cavalry division of Crook, which had, with great difficulty, waded the river, which was too deep for the infantry. General Humphreys, however, being unadvised of the destruction of the bridges below, and nothing doubting that Ord's and Wright's commands were

getting to work in that direction, contracted his own left and extended his right the length of a division front, hoping thereby to get on the left flank of the enemy,¹ and then threw forward three regiments of Miles' division. The Confederates were, however, found in force and unshaken, so that Miles' attack was thrown off. It being now about nightfall, affairs remained in this condition. Barlow had come up from the river, but too late to justify a renewal of aggressive operations on Humphreys' part.

The captures of the corps during this day included nineteen guns, most of which were taken in the redoubts commanding High Bridge, and one hundred and thirty wagons, which were destroyed. The loss of the Second Corps was 571 officers and men killed, wounded, and missing, of whom the First Division lost 424; the Second, 131; the Third, 16. Among the wounded were Colonel Starbird, Nineteenth Maine, and that most gallant and capable staff officer, Major Bingham. Among the prisoners taken was General Lewis, commanding a brigade of Gordon's corps, severely wounded.

¹ General Humphreys quotes, with great apparent satisfaction, an extract from *McGowan's South Carolina Brigade*, as showing how fully the attention of the Confederate force on the north bank of the Appomattox, on the 7th of April, was occupied by the movements of the two divisions under his command. "The enemy seemed ubiquitous. We were instructed to be prepared to fight on either flank. On our right flank firing was pretty steadily kept up; in our front a regular battle was going on. Mahone's division was engaged, and a portion of Field's. . . . The firing increased in rapidity and extent until three sides were at once set upon by the enemy. . . . I never was so bewildered as on this occasion."

THE PURSUIT CONTINUED—APRIL 8TH.

General Humphreys, in his history, attributes great importance to the crossing of the Appomattox on the 7th. But for the promptitude and energy of General Barlow and his command, the wagon-road bridge could not have been saved; and the Second Corps would have been compelled, like the troops of Ord and Wright, to remain helpless on the south bank, while Lee's army was gaining distance on its way to Lynchburg. "If," says General Humphreys, "no infantry had crossed the Appomattox on the 7th, he (General Lee) could have reached New Store that night, Appomattox Station on the afternoon of the 8th, obtained rations there, and moved that evening toward Lynchburg. A march the next day, the 9th, would have brought him to Lynchburg." By the detention at Farmville, on the other hand, General Lee, in General Humphreys' judgment, lost time which he could not regain by night marches, failed to obtain the much-needed supplies awaiting him at Appomattox Station, and gave opportunity to Sheridan and Ord to post themselves across his path at Appomattox Court House.

It was while Humphreys was in close contact with the Confederate forces at Farmville, as described, that, at half-past eight o'clock on the evening of the 7th, General Williams, Adjutant-General of the Army of the Potomac, brought to the Second Corps headquarters Grant's first letter to Lee, demanding the surrender of the Confederate army. This letter General Humphreys, in compliance with instructions, immediately sent across the brief space of but a few hundred yards which separated the two armies. General Lee's reply was brought back within an hour, showing his presence upon that part of the

field ; and General Williams immediately set out with it, by way of High Bridge, to rejoin General Grant at Farmville, where he was making his headquarters with Generals Ord and Wright.

In the early morning of the 8th it was ascertained that, as anticipated, the Confederate forces had moved off during the night ; and the pursuit was accordingly taken up by the Second Corps at half-past five o'clock, while the Sixth Corps, under Wright, now crossing to the north bank of the Appomattox by a pontoon bridge, also followed hard on Lee's rear. Sheridan, with the cavalry and the Fifth Corps of the Army of the Potomac, and with all the troops of the Army of the James, pushed rapidly along the south bank of the river, with a view to getting first to Appomattox Court House and heading off the retreating Confederates.

While Humphreys was still in hot pursuit along the north bank of the river, Grant's second letter to Lee was sent through the lines ; but no delay was permitted pending the reply of the Confederate commander-in-chief, which was not received until afternoon. In this letter General Lee expressed the opinion that the exigency had not arisen which required the surrender of his forces, but indicated a willingness to meet General Grant in an interview which should have for its object the restoration of peace. Meanwhile, Sheridan was pressing relentlessly westward, urging his men to the utmost endurance in the effort to get first to Appomattox Court House. Late in the afternoon the dashing Custer seized Appomattox Station, four miles to the southwest of the Court House, capturing here the trains loaded with supplies for Lee's famishing troops, together with a large park of artillery and many prisoners. The end was now clear in view ; and, inspired by the prospect of final victory, the cavalry

still pushed forward, and by nightfall had gained a position on the west of the Court House, cutting off Lee's army from Lynchburg, as before it had been cut off from Danville.

Whether, however, the cavalry should be able to hold this position on the following morning would depend on the infantry of Ord and Griffin, already worn to the limit of human endurance by the unceasing marches of this and the preceding days. It scarcely seemed possible that the troops should compass the distance still remaining to place them on the line of the Confederate march; but Sheridan was relentless in his demands, and the infantry, full of hope to end the war by one supreme effort, toiled onward through the long hours of the night.

Both Grant and Meade, feeling that they could well leave to Sheridan the enterprise of cutting off Lee's retreat, continued all the day of the 8th to accompany the column of the Second and Sixth Corps, which kept marching, with almost the speed of cavalry, in the direct pursuit of the enemy along the stage road. Hundreds of the best and bravest men fell out, utterly exhausted from want of sleep and food; but it was not until full midnight that the regiments at the head of the column were allowed to throw themselves upon the ground to get such repose as they might before morning. Even so, it was not until daybreak that the rear of the column was closed up and all the troops were at rest.

THE LAST DAY—APRIL 9TH.

With a view to whatever duty, whether of marching or of fighting, the desperate resolution of the Army of Northern Virginia might require of their pursuers, it was deemed best to ration the troops out of the wagons

which had rolled into camp after the last infantry had arrived at daybreak; and it was, accordingly, not until eight o'clock that the Second Corps again took up the chase. Prior to this, Grant's third letter to Lee had been taken through the lines by Colonel Whittier, Adjutant-General of the corps; but, without waiting for a reply, Humphreys pushed steadily forward, and at eleven o'clock came up with the skirmishers of Longstreet. As full of fire as when, ten days before, he led his corps across Hatcher's Run, Humphreys at once essayed to attack the enemy, whom he found in position, but refrained on receiving positive assurances from the Confederate officers on his front that the conditions of surrender were being arranged, and that no advantage would be taken of the suspension of the attack. For now it had become known to both armies that the gallant Fifth and Twenty-fourth Corps, pressing onward all night against indescribable fatigues, had not halted until they ranged themselves behind the cavalry, which, to complete the good work it had begun on the 29th of March, had, the evening before, drawn its bold array across Lee's path, cutting off the last chance of escape from that undaunted army which had done and dared and endured so much in a cause which was not the cause of peace, freedom, and righteousness.

At four o'clock in the afternoon the glad news was received that the Army of Northern Virginia had capitulated, and that the long struggle for the maintenance of the union of the States was virtually ended. Of the magnanimity with which the conqueror bore his triumph and hastened to lift his fallen foe it is not necessary to speak. The world knows the story well; and in both sections of the reunited country this will ever be among his chiefest titles to fame.

The captures of the Second Corps during the campaign had embraced 35 guns, 16 battle-flags, 4,600 prisoners, and over four hundred wagons. Its losses had been about nineteen hundred.

The following officers were killed or mortally wounded during the closing campaign, March 29 to April 7, 1865 :

Brigadier and Brevet Major-General Thomas A. Smyth, United States Volunteers; Brevet Colonel Charles J. Mills, Assistant Adjutant-General.

Captains Charles Wilson and John Bond, Eighty-first Pennsylvania.

Captain H. H. Darby, Sixty-fourth New York.

Captain Samuel S. Kerr (Brevet-Major) and Lieutenants William D. Lank and William J. Cunningham, One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania.

Captain John Quay, One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York.

Captain Isaac H. Boyd, Nineteenth Massachusetts.

Captain Edward B. Carroll, Sixty-third New York.

Captain William Collins, and Lieutenant Warren Ryder, Fifth New Hampshire.

Lieutenants John Burke, Paul Schreiber, and Max Klingenberg, Fifty-second New York.

Lieutenant Stephen Patterson, Seventh Michigan.

Lieutenant Edward J. Cormick, One Hundred and Twenty-fourth New York.

Lieutenant Samuel Everhart, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Charles H. Danford, Ninety-third New York.

Lieutenant Eugene Brady, One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania.

Lieutenant Silas W. Belding, One Hundred and Eleventh New York.

Lieutenant William Malcolm, Sixty-first New York.

Lieutenant Schollay G. Usher, Seventeenth Maine.

Lieutenant Wellington Bird, Eighth New Jersey.

Lieutenant Stephen A. Bailey, Eighty-sixth New York.

Lieutenant Peter Pichler, Second New York Heavy Artillery.

Lieutenant Charles H. Burghardt, Fourth New York Heavy Artillery.

Lieutenant H. T. Clifton, Ninety-ninth Pennsylvania.

Disbanded.

The surrender of Lee's Army, at Appomattox Court House, on the 9th of May, practically closed the war, which, but for that fortunate conclusion of Grant's fierce pursuit, might have been protracted for months among the mountains of North Carolina. Awaiting, however, the submission of Johnston's Army and of the trans-Mississippi forces of the Confederacy, it was deemed necessary to hold the Army of the Potomac still in hand.

On the 11th of April, two days after the surrender, the corps began a march which brought it on the 13th to Burksville, where the remainder of the month was passed in camp. The commanding officers of brigades and divisions, on the 30th of April, were as follows :

First Division : Brevet Major-General Miles.

First Brigade : Colonel John Fraser.

Second Brigade : Colonel Robert Nugent.

Third Brigade : Brevet Brigadier-General Madill.

Fourth Brigade : Brevet Brigadier-General Ramsey.

Second Division : Brevet Major-General Barlow.

First Brigade : Colonel William A. Olmstead.

Second Brigade : Colonel J. P. McIvor.

Third Brigade : Colonel Daniel Woodall.

Third Division : Brevet Major-General Mott.

First Brigade : Brigadier-General de Trobriand.

Second Brigade : Brigadier-General Pierce.

Third Brigade : Brevet Brigadier-General McAllister.

Artillery Brigade : Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel John G. Hazard.

The regiments which had disappeared from the roster since the 31st of December were the following :

Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania, consolidated in January with the Fifty-seventh Pennsylvania, Lieutenant-Colonel George Zinn, becoming Colonel of the Fifty-seventh; Second United States Sharpshooters, broken up in January, its companies being transferred to regiments from the several States from which they were originally raised—as follows: Company A to the First Minnesota; Company B to the Fifth Michigan; Company C to the One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania; Company D to the Seventeenth Maine; Companies E and H to the Fourth Vermont (Sixth Corps); Companies F and G to Fifth New Hampshire.

Seventh New York Heavy Artillery, John F. Mount, Major, detached in February.

Sixty-sixth New York, Brevet Brigadier-General John S. Hammill, Lieutenant-Colonel, detached in April.

On the 2d of May the corps began its march through Jetersville and Amelia Court House to Richmond; thence through Hanover Court House to Fredericks-

burg; thence across the Occoquan to Bailey's Cross Roads, near Alexandria. Here the corps remained through the rest of May, participating on the 23d in the last great review of the Army of the Potomac.

The organizations disappearing from the corps during the month of May comprised the following sterling regiments:

Mustered out of service, Fourteenth Connecticut, May 21st: Theodore G. Ellis,¹ Colonel; Samuel A. Moore, Lieutenant-Colonel; veterans and recruits to Second Connecticut Heavy Artillery.

One Hundred and Eighth New York, May 28th: Charles J. Powers,¹ Colonel; Francis E. Pierce, Lieutenant-Colonel.

One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania, May 31st: Brevet Brigadier-General John Fraser, Colonel.

One Hundred and Forty-first Pennsylvania, May 28th: Brevet Brigadier-General Henry J. Madill,² Colonel; Joseph H. Horton, Lieutenant-Colonel.

One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania, May 31st: David B. McCreary,¹ Lieutenant-Colonel; Charles M. Lynch, Major.

Nineteenth Maine, May 31st: Isaac W. Starbird,¹ Colonel; Joseph W. Spaulding, Lieutenant-Colonel; David E. Parsons, Major; veterans and recruits to First Maine Heavy Artillery.

The early days of June witnessed the disappearance, in quick succession, from the ranks of the Second Corps of many regiments which had long been conspicuous on

¹ Subsequently brevetted Brigadier-General.

² Subsequently brevetted Major-General.

its line of battle. On the 25th of June, peace being definitely restored, and the Union of the States established, let us hope and trust, forever, the Second Army Corps was formally discontinued and its thrice renowned divisions and brigades finally dissolved, although some of their regiments were retained in service for some weeks or months longer.

Of the wonderful exhibition of civic virtue which characterized the return to the arts of peace of more than eight hundred thousand Union soldiers, within the course of a few months, it is not necessary to speak here. As the men who had so long been gathered under the standards of the Second Corps had not been less distinguished than any others for their discipline in camp, their endurance on the painful and protracted march, and their courage and tenacity in the long, hard, and doubtful battle, so the historian of this gallant body of troops may rightfully claim for them honor second to none for their good citizenship since the restoration of peace.

The following table concludes the series of statistics regarding the numbers and constituents of the corps, which have been given for the several successive periods of its history:

| Date. | Present for duty. | On extra or daily duty. | Sick. | In arrest or confinement. | Total present. | Absent. | Aggregate present and absent. |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------|---------------------------|----------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1865. | | | | | | | |
| January 31st | 20,964 | 3,555 | 1,510 | 128 | 26,157 | 21,282 | 47,439 |
| February 28th | 20,718 | 3,461 | 1,418 | 126 | 25,723 | 20,301 | 46,024 |
| March 31st | 21,171 | 3,796 | 1,129 | 134 | 26,230 | 19,693 | 45,923 |
| April 30th | 22,138 | 4,046 | 1,277 | 166 | 27,627 | 18,619 | 46,246 |
| May 31st | 21,562 | 2,975 | 1,108 | 122 | 25,767 | 15,705 | 41,472 |
| June 20th | 7,343 | 1,326 | 368 | 87 | 9,124 | 6,313 | 15,437 |

The following table exhibits these figures reduced to percentages :

| Date. | Present for duty. | On extra or daily duty. | Sick or in arrest. | Total present. | Absent. | Aggregate present and absent. |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1865. | | | | | | |
| January 31st | 44.19 | 7.50 | 3.45 | 55.14 | 44.86 | 100 |
| February 28th | 45.02 | 7.52 | 3.35 | 55.89 | 44.11 | 100 |
| March 31st | 46.10 | 8.27 | 2.75 | 57.12 | 42.88 | 100 |
| April 30th | 47.87 | 8.75 | 3.12 | 59.74 | 40.26 | 100 |
| May 31st | 51.99 | 7.17 | 2.97 | 62.13 | 37.87 | 100 |
| June 20th | 47.57 | 8.59 | 2.95 | 59.11 | 40.89 | 100 |

The following field officers left the corps between January 1st and May 31st :

DISCHARGED.—In January: Colonel James M. Willett, Eighth New York Heavy Artillery ; Lieutenant-Colonels Isaac B. Fisher, Seventh West Virginia ; James G. Hughes, Thirty-ninth New York ; Lorenzo D. Bumpus, Fifty-seventh Pennsylvania ; and Enoch E. Lewis, One Hundred and Tenth Pennsylvania ; Majors Francis Pruyn, Seventh New York Heavy Artillery, and Patrick S. Tinen, Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania. In February : Brevet Brigadier-General Hiram L. Brown, Colonel One Hundred and Forty-fifth Pennsylvania ; Lieutenant-Colonels Richard S. Thompson, Twelfth New Jersey, and George A. Fairbanks, One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania ; Majors Joseph W. Corning, One Hundred and Eleventh New York ; John C. Broatch, Fourteenth Connecticut ; Timothy O'Brien, One Hundred and Fifty-second New York. In March : Lieutenant-Colonel Casper W. Tyler, One Hundred and Forty-first Pennsylvania, and Major Abram Sickles, Seventh New York Heavy Artillery. In April : Brevet Brigadier-General George W. West, Colonel Seventeenth Maine ; Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas B. Rodgers, One Hundred and Fortieth Pennsylvania ; Brevet-Colonel Thomas L. Livermore, Major Fifth New Hampshire ; Major William Arthur, Fourth New York Heavy Artillery. In May: Lieutenant-Colonels Levi P. Wright, First Massachusetts Heavy Artillery, and Arthur R. Curtis, Twentieth Massachusetts ; Majors John McEwen Hoyde,

Thirty-ninth New York ; P. Nelson, Sixty-sixth New York ; (Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel) Isaac F. Hamilton, One Hundred and Tenth Pennsylvania ; Moracio Van Sickle, Seventh Michigan. Two officers who had rendered distinguished services in the artillery of the corps, Brevet-Major J. Henry Sleeper, Captain Tenth Massachusetts Battery, and Brevet-Captain W. S. Perrin, Lieutenant First Rhode Island Artillery, were also discharged during February.

RESIGNED.—In May : Lieutenant-Colonel Charles C. Calahan, Fourth Ohio Battalion.

MUSTERED OUT ON EXPIRATION OF TERM OF SERVICE.—In January : Major Frank Williams, Fourth New York Heavy Artillery. In February : Lieutenant-Colonel Benjamin C. Butler and Major Samuel McConishe, Ninety-third New York. In May : Lieutenant-Colonel George W. Thompson, One Hundred and Fifty-second New York.

PROMOTED.—Lieutenant-Colonel John Willian, Eighth New Jersey, was in April promoted to be Colonel of the Twelfth.

DISMISSED.—Two officers were dismissed the service during this period, viz., Lieutenant-Colonel John H. Gleason, Sixty-third New York, and Major Benjamin Von Raden, Second New York Heavy Artillery.

The regiments and battalions borne on the rolls of the Corps on the 1st of June, were subsequently mustered out, as appears by the Official Register of the Volunteer Forces, at the several dates named.

First Delaware, July 12, 1865, Brevet Brigadier-General Daniel Woodall, Colonel ; Joseph C. Nichols, Lieutenant-Colonel ; John T. Dent, Major.

Twentieth Indiana, July 12th, Brevet-Colonel Albert S. Andrews, Lieutenant-Colonel ; John W. Shafer, Major.

First Maine Heavy Artillery, September 11th, Russell B. Shepard,¹ Colonel ; Zimro A. Smith, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Harrison G. Smith, Major.

Seventeenth Maine, June 4th, Charles P. Mattocks,¹ Colonel ;

¹ Subsequently brevetted Brigadier-General.

William Hobson,¹ Lieutenant-Colonel ; veterans and recruits to First Maine Heavy Artillery.

First Massachusetts Heavy Artillery, August 16th, Nathaniel S. Shatswell, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Horace Holt, Major.

Eleventh Massachusetts, July 14th, Thomas H. Dunham,¹ Lieutenant-Colonel ; James F. Mansfield, Major.

Nineteenth Massachusetts, June 30th, Edmund Rice, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Morsena Dunn, Major.

Twentieth Massachusetts, July 16th, Brevet Brigadier-General George N. Macy,² Colonel ; Rufus P. Lincoln, Lieutenant-Colonel ; John Kelliher, Major.

Twenty-eighth Massachusetts, June 30th, James Flemming, Lieutenant-Colonel.

Fifth Michigan, July 5th, Brevet Brigadier-General John Pulford, Colonel ; Daniel S. Root, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Edgar H. Shook, Major.

Seventh Michigan, July 5th, Brevet Colonel George W. La Point, Lieutenant-Colonel.

Twenty-sixth Michigan, June 4th, Brevet Brigadier-General Henry H. Wells, Colonel ; Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Nathan Church, Major.

First Minnesota, July 14th, Mark W. Downie, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Frank Houston, Major.

Fifth New Hampshire, June 28th, Welcome A. Crafts, Lieutenant-Colonel.

Seventh New Jersey, July 17th, Brevet Brigadier-General Francis Price, Colonel ; Daniel Hart, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Charles H. Fosselman, Major.

Eighth New Jersey, July 17th, Brevet Brigadier-General John Ramsey,² Colonel ; Henry Hartford, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Louis M. Morris, Major.

Eleventh New Jersey, July 5th, Brevet Brigadier-General Robert McAllister,² Colonel ; Brevet Colonel John Schoonover, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Thomas J. Halsey, Major.

Twelfth New Jersey, July 15th, Brevet Brigadier-General John Willian, Colonel ; Edward M. Du Bois, Major.

Second New York Heavy Artillery, September 29th, Brevet Brigadier-General Joseph N. G. Whistler, Colonel ; Oscar F. Hul-

¹ Subsequently brevetted Brigadier-General.

² Subsequently brevetted Major-General.

ser, Edward A. Selkirk and (Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel) Sullivan B. Lamoreaux, Majors.

Fourth New York Heavy Artillery, September 26th, Brevet Major-General John C. Tidball, Colonel; Brevet Colonel Thomas R. Allcock,¹ Lieutenant-Colonel; Brevet Lieutenant-Colonels Seward F. Gould and Derrick F. Hamlink, and Henry E. Richmond, Majors.

Eighth New York Heavy Artillery, June 5th, Joel B. Baker, Colonel; Joseph W. Holmes, Lieutenant-Colonel; Henry M. Starr, Samuel D. Ludden, and James F. Low, Jr., Majors; veterans and recruits to the Tenth New York Infantry.

Seventh New York, August 4th, Brevet Brigadier-General George Von Schack, Colonel; Anthony Pokorny, Lieutenant-Colonel; Jacob Scheu, Major.

Tenth New York, June 30th, Joel B. Baker, Colonel; George F. Hopper, Lieutenant-Colonel; Anthony Woods, Major.

Thirty-ninth New York, July 1st, Augustus Funk, Colonel.

Fortieth New York, June 27th, Madison M. Cannon, Lieutenant-Colonel; Thomas Crawford, Major.

Fifty-second New York, July 1st, Henry M. Karples, Lieutenant-Colonel; Henry P. Ritzius, Major.

Fifty-ninth New York, June 30th, Brevet Brigadier-General William A. Olmstead, Colonel; James A. Jewell, Lieutenant-Colonel; William T. Sims, Major.

Sixty-first New York, July 14th, Brevet Brigadier-General George W. Scott, Colonel; Brevet-Colonel Richard A. Brown, Lieutenant-Colonel; George W. Shaffer, Major.

Sixty-third New York, June 30th, James D. Brady,¹ Lieutenant-Colonel.

Sixty-fourth New York, July 14th, Brevet Brigadier-General William Glenny, Lieutenant-Colonel; Theodore Tyeer, Major.

Sixty-ninth New York, June 30th, Brevet Brigadier-General Robert Nugent, Colonel; Brevet Colonel James J. Smith, Lieutenant-Colonel; Richard Moroney, Major.

Seventy-third New York, June 29th, Brevet Colonel Michael W. Burns, Lieutenant-Colonel; Lawrence H. Thompson, Major.

Eighty-sixth New York, June 27th, Nathan H. Vincent, Lieutenant-Colonel; Luzerne Todd, Major.

¹ Subsequently brevetted Major-General.

Eighty-eighth New York, June 30th : Brevet Colonel Dennis F. Burke, Lieutenant-Colonel ; John W. Byron, Major.

Ninety-third New York, June 20th, Harriland Gifford, Lieutenant-Colonel ; J. H. Northrop, Major.

One Hundred and Eleventh New York, June 3d, Brevet Brigadier-General Clinton D. McDougall, Colonel ; Brevet Colonel Lewis W. Husk, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Sidney Mead, Major.

One Hundred and Twentieth New York, June 3d, Brevet Brigadier-General George H. Sharpe,¹ Colonel ; Brevet Colonel Abram L. Lockwood, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Walter F. Scott, Major.

One Hundred and Twenty-fourth New York, June 3d, Brevet Colonel Charles H. Weygant, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Henry S. Murray, Major.

One Hundred and Twenty-fifth New York, June 5th, Joseph Hyde, Lieutenant-Colonel ; William H. H. Brainard, Major.

One Hundred and Twenty-sixth New York, Ira Smith Brown, Major.

One Hundred and Fifty-second New York, July 15th, James E. Curtiss,* Lieutenant-Colonel ; Edward C. Gilbert, Major.

One Hundred and Fifty-fifth New York, July 15th, John Byrnes, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Francis Page, Major.

One Hundred and Sixty-fourth New York, July 15th, William DeLacy,* Lieutenant-Colonel ; John Beattie, Major.

One Hundred and Seventieth New York, July 15th, Brevet Brigadier-General James P. McIvor,² Colonel ; Charles Hagan, Major.

One Hundred and Eighty-second New York (Sixty-ninth Militia), July 15th, John Coonan, Lieutenant Colonel ; Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Heggart, Major.

Fourth Ohio Battalion, July 12th, S. W. DeWitt, Lieutenant-Colonel.

Fifty-third Pennsylvania, June 30th, William M. Mintzer,² Colonel ; George C. Anderson, Lieutenant-Colonel ; George D. Pifer, Major.

Fifty-seventh Pennsylvania, June 29th, Brevet Brigadier-General George Zinn, Colonel ; Brevet Colonel George Perkins, Lieu-

¹ Subsequently brevetted Major-General.

² Subsequently brevetted Brigadier-General.

tenant-Colonel ; Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Samuel Bryan, Major.

Sixty-ninth Pennsylvania, July 1st, William Davis, Lieutenant-Colonel ; James O'Reilly, Major.

Eighty-first Pennsylvania, June 29th, Brevet Colonel William Wilson, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Lawrence Mercer, Major.

Ninety-ninth Pennsylvania, July 1st, Edwin R. Biles,¹ Colonel ; Peter Fritz, Jr.,¹ Lieutenant-Colonel ; George W. Tomlinson, Major.

One Hundred and Fifth Pennsylvania, July 11th, James Miller, Colonel ; Oliver C. Reddick, Lieutenant-Colonel.

One Hundred and Sixth Pennsylvania, June 30th : no field officers.

One Hundred and Tenth Pennsylvania, June 28th, Franklin B. Stewart, Lieutenant-Colonel.

One Hundred and Sixteenth Pennsylvania : companies mustered out between June 3d and July 14th, David W. McGraw, Lieutenant-Colonel.

One Hundred and Forty-eighth Pennsylvania, June 1st, James F. Weaver, Lieutenant-Colonel ; George A. Bayard, Major.

One Hundred and Eighty-third Pennsylvania, July 13th, George T. Egbert, Colonel ; Augustin T. Lynch, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Horace P. Egbert, Major.

One Hundred and Eighty-fourth Pennsylvania, July 14th, John H. Storer, Colonel ; Charles Kleckner, Lieutenant-Colonel ; George L. Ritman, Major.

Seventh West Virginia, July 1st, Francis W. H. Baldwin, Lieutenant-Colonel ; Marcus Fetty, Major.

Thirty-sixth Wisconsin, July 12th, Clement E. Warner, Lieutenant-Colonel ; W. H. Hamilton, Major.

¹ Subsequently brevetted Brigadier-General.

APPENDIX I.

COMMISSIONED OFFICERS OF THE SECOND ARMY CORPS KILLED OR MORTALLY WOUNDED IN ACTION.

*Their bones are dust,
Their good swords rust,
Their souls are with the saints, we trust.*

ABBOTT, ALBERT G., Lieut., 542
Abbott, Henry L., Major, 435
Abbott, Hewitt J., Lieut., 78
Abraham, Joseph S., Lieut., 514
Acheson, David, Capt., 301
Adams, Henry M., Lieut., 538
Allen, Richard, Capt., 194
Alley, L. F., Lieut., 194
Alton, Pulaski V., Lieut., 478
Amiet, Carl V., Lieut., 304
Amo, Walter von, Capt., 478
Angell, O. F., Capt., 464
Angell, M. C., Capt., 120
Apel, August von, Lieut., 193
Austin, Ruel G., Lieut., 301
Aydelott, Z., Lieut., 195

BABCOCK, WILLIS G., Lieut., 303
Bailey, John, Capt., 436
Bailey, Stephen A., Lieut.¹
Baird, William H., Lieut.-Col., 536
Baldwin, J. C., Lieut., 478
Ballenger, Edward, Lieut., 122
Ballou, Charles O., Lieut., 194
Barclay, M. H., Capt., 514
Barker, Josiah W., Lieut., 464
Barnes, Charles W., Lieut., 122
Barnes, Dennis E., Capt., 436
Barnes, Edward N., Lieut.²
Barry, Allen E., Lieut., 542
Bartholomew, John C., Lieut., 477
Bartholomew, Perkins, Lieut., 639
Bartlett, Franklin, Lieut., 650
Batchelder, George W., Major, 120

Bates, Willard W., Lieut.-Col., 538
Bayard, John A., Lieut., 303
Bean, Charles W., Lieut., 122
Bearley, Wesley W., Lieut., 478
Becker, Edward H., Capt., 193
Beckwith, R. S., Lieut., 194
Belding, Silas W., Lieut., 690
Bell, Robert H., Capt., 488
Berry, William, Lieut., 121
Berry, William A., Capt., 542
Bibber, Gershom C., Lieut., 489
Bible, William H., Lieut., 252
Bierworth, Francis V., Capt., 121
Bill, Horace H., Lieut., 122
Bird, Wellington, Lieut., 690
Birmingham, Andrew, Lieut., 194
Blaisdell, William, Col., 547
Blake, Edwin L., Major, 542
Blake, John J., Capt., 478
Blauvelt, Daniel, Capt., 504
Blinn, Jarvis E., Capt., 121
Blinn, John P., Capt., 303
Boettcher, Max, Capt., 193
Bond, John, Capt., 689
Bostwick, Lewis E., Lieut., 122
Bowers, John, Lieut.¹
Boyd, Isaac H., Capt., 689
Boyd, Stewart A., Lieut., 639
Boyle, P. T., Capt., 436
Boyle, Robert, Lieut., 514
Bradley, John T., Lieut.²
Brady, Eugene, Lieut., 689
Brandt, F., Lieut., 650
Brighton, William, Lieut., 195

¹ 86th N. Y.; should be on page 652.

² 125th N. Y.; should be on page 547.

¹ 57th Pa.; should be on page 478.

² 14th Conn.; should be on page 652.

- Briggs, William H., Lieut., 504
 Brockway, Elias, Lieut., 477
 Bronson, Isaac R., Capt., 252
 Brooks, Arthur L., Capt., 52
 Brower, Henry D., Lieut., 601
 Brown, Charles L., Major, 85
 Brown, Fayette S., Lieut., 514
 Brown, Mavor R., Lieut., 194
 Brown, Morris, Jr., Capt., 547
 Brown, Washington, Capt., 193
 Brownson, Edward B., Capt., 600
 Bryan, George A., Lieut., 537
 Bryan, William, Lieut., 121
 Buchenhagen, B. von, Lieut., 193
 Buckley, Patrick, Lieut., 194
 Bull, J. H., Lieut.-Col., 190
 Bullis, James E., Lieut., 538
 Burghardt, Charles H., Lieut., 690
 Burke, John, Lieut., 689
 Burns, Thomas, Lieut., 639
 Burt, Edwin, Lieut.-Col., 435
 Burwell, P. B., Capt., 504
 Buss, Elisha G., Lieut., 302
 Butler, Edward K., Capt., 514
 Buxton, Albert, Capt., 437
 Byrnes, James E., Lieut., 514
 Byrnes, Richard, Col., 510

 CABOT, CHARLES F., Capt., 194
 Caldwell, H. J., Lieut., 437
 Caldwell, Joseph S., Lieut., 514
 Campbell, Oliver M., Lieut., 514
 Canfield, David E., Lieut., 194
 Card, Dayton T., Lieut., 304
 Carroll, Charles, Lieut., 488
 Carroll, Charles S., Lieut., 194
 Carroll, Edward B., Capt., 689
 Carver, Lafayette, Lieut., 543
 Chamberlain, Henry, Lieut., 437
 Chamberlain, James, Capt., 639
 Chaplin, Daniel, Col., 578
 Chapman, A. B., Lieut.-Col., 435
 Chapman, Henry K., Lieut., 121
 Chapman, Jedediah, Jr., Lieut., 303
 Chase, A. L., Lieut., 514
 Cherry, James, Lieut., 464
 Claffee, Thomas, Lieut., 195
 Clapp, E. S. P., Lieut., 477
 Clark, James, Lieut., 497
 Clark, James W., Lieut., 542
 Clark, Thomas, Lieut., 566
 Clarke, John A., Lieut., 121
 Clarke, Timothy, Capt., 121
 Clay, Fletcher, Lieut., 193
 Cleminshaw, C. E., Lieut., 477
 Clifton, H. T., Lieut., 690
 Clooney, Patrick F., Capt., 122
 Clyde, William J., Capt., 437
 Cochrane, William F., Capt., 486
 Coffey, John, Lieut., 477

 Coleman, Isaac De Witt, Lieut., 537
 Collins, William A., Capt., 446
 Collins, Wm., Capt., 689
 Conner, Eli T., Lieut.-Col., 85
 Connery, John, Capt., 580
 Conser, John C., Capt., 639
 Convery, John, Lieut., 122
 Conway, John, Lieut., 120
 Cook, James B., Lieut., 478
 Coomes, William A., Lieut., 194
 Coons, John, Col., 476
 Corbin, Frank S., Lieut., 121
 Core, Thompson, Capt., 478
 Cormick, Edward J., Lieut., 689
 Coste, Michael, Lieut., 360
 Coultis, William H., Lieut., 52
 Craig, Calvin A., Col., 580
 Cranmer, Anson C., Lieut., 122
 Cranston, John, Lieut., 303
 Crissey, Frederick M., Lieut., 122
 Crist, David, Capt., 503
 Crosby, George H. D., Lieut., 121
 Cross, Edward E., Col., 301
 Cross, Isaac T., Lieut., 195
 Crowell, John O., Lieut., 195
 Crowell, Samuel W., Lieut., 542
 Cunningham, William J., Lieut., 689
 Curry, William L., Lieut.-Col., 477
 Cushing, Alonzo H., Lieut., 304

 DAGGETT, SAMUEL W., Capt., 542
 Dale, Richard C., Lieut.-Col., 477
 Danford, Charles H., Lieut., 689
 Darby, H. H., Capt., 689
 Darlington, Henry H., Lieut., 195
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 Egan, William H., Lieut., 477
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 Evans, William J., Capt., 477
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¹ 125th N. Y.; should be on page 504.

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¹ 183d Pa.; should be on page 515.

² 170th N. Y.; should be on page 497.

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¹ 8th N. Y.; should be found on p. 634.

² 20th Mass.; should be on page 652.

³ 20th Mass.; should be on page 347; erroneously reported on page 302.

⁴ 5th Mich.; should be on page 497.

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 Porter, Peter A., Col., 512
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¹ 110th Pa.; should be on p. 477.

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¹ 63d Pa.; should be on page 515.

¹ 57th Pa.; should be on page 478.

² 140th Pa.; should be on page 652.

In addition to the foregoing, we give the following names of officers killed or mortally wounded in unnamed skirmishes, by

sharpshooting on the picket-line, or by shell explosions not in battle.

| | WOUNDS RECEIVED. |
|--|--------------------|
| Austin, Alfred H., Lieut., 7th N. J..... | November 11, 1864 |
| Birdsall, Jonathan, Lieut., 124th N. Y..... | October 22, 1864 |
| Boise, George C., Lieut., 11th N. J..... | October 8, 1864 |
| Bruen, David R., Lieut., 39th N. Y..... | November 24, 1864 |
| Butler, Francis W., Capt., 5th N. H..... | June 30, 1864 |
| Cronin, Philip, Lieut., 155th N. Y..... | October 6, 1864 |
| Dedrick, Wm. H., Lieut., 120th N. Y..... | September 20, 1864 |
| Hill, John E., Assistant Surgeon, 19th Mass..... | September 11, 1864 |
| Hobbs, Wellington, Lieut., 17th Me..... | October 24, 1864 |
| Jenkins, Joseph S., Lieut., 184th Penn..... | November 6, 1864 |
| Le Fort, George, Capt., 73d N. Y..... | May 20, 1864 |
| Peel, Washington, Lieut., 40th N. Y..... | September 20, 1864 |
| Stafford, M. B., Lieut.-Col., 86th N. Y..... | November 29, 1864 |
| Thompson, Wm. P., Capt., 20th Ind..... | October 7, 1864 |
| Wolf, Louis, Lieut., 52d N. Y..... | October 21, 1864 |

To these should be added Lieut. Edward Bond, 20th Mass., killed by guerillas, May 14, 1864, while in ambulance *en route* from Spotsylvania to Fredericksburg; and Capt. B. A. Evans, 4th Ohio, captured May 6, 1864, and killed by a sentry while attempting to escape from the enemy's hands.

NUMBER KILLED IN EACH GRADE.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Major-General | 1 |
| Brigadier-Generals..... | 3 |
| Colonels..... | 25 |
| Lieutenant-Colonels..... | 29 |
| Majors..... | 23 |
| Surgeons and Assistant Surgeons..... | 3 |
| Captains..... | 255 |
| Lieutenants..... | 406 |
| Total | 745 |

APPENDIX II.

NAMES OF OFFICERS OF THE UNION ARMIES MENTIONED IN THIS HISTORY.

[Officers below the rank of field officer, killed or mortally wounded in action, will be found named in the special list preceding this index. As a rule, officers are here mentioned by the highest rank by which they are designated in this history, which is not necessarily the highest rank ultimately attained by them.]

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